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# Thinking Outside Pandora's Box: Now That the Idea of God Has Been Declared Dead, Has All Hope Been Lost for Philosophy and Humankind?

Mary Ann Fenicato

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# *Thinking Outside Pandora's Box*

*Now That the Idea of God Has Been Declared Dead,  
Has All Hope Been Lost for Philosophy and Humankind?*



*A Dissertation*

*Presented to the Faculty*

*of the Philosophy Department*

*McAnaulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts*

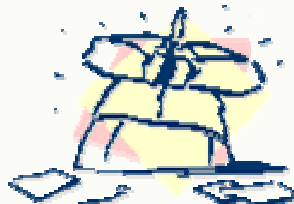
*Duquesne University*

*in partial fulfillment of*

*the requirements for the*

*degree of*

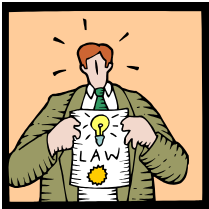
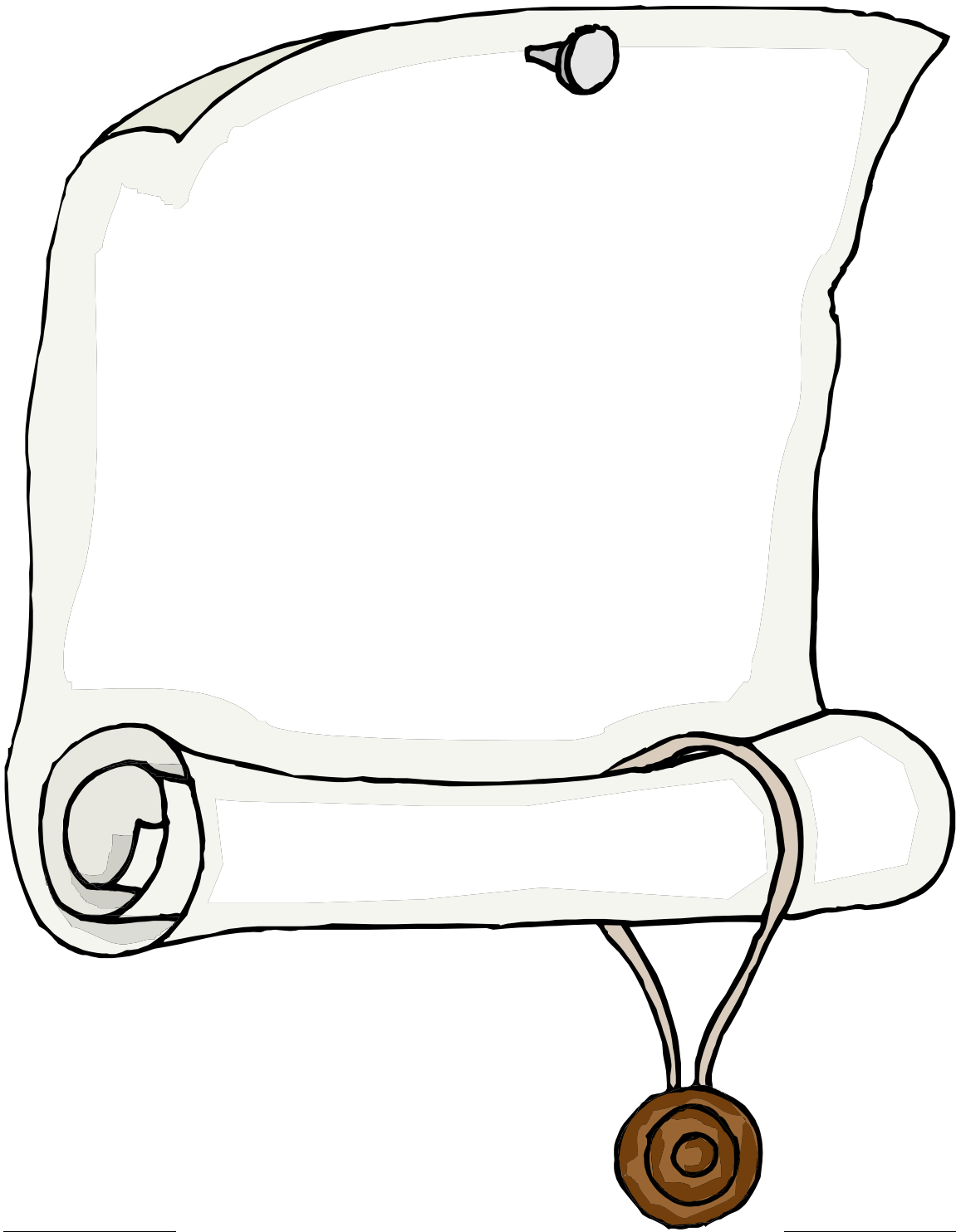
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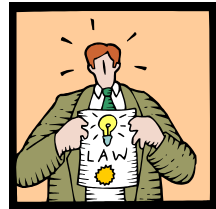
*by:*

*MaryAnn Fenicato, Esq.*

*November 29, 2004*



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## ***PREFACE***

### **A. Introduction**

This dissertation is hereby dedicated to all my sources of inspiration heretofore, i.e., human, canine and divine, and hopefully, also to all those yet to come.

#### **1. Human Mentors**



To my human mentors, I generally dedicate the following two songs. Special thanks, however, to a certain attorney named Michael, whose formidable legal valiance emulated St. Michael the Archangel, and who, on a personal level, was a truly gentle man who showed me how peaceful heaven will be.

**a) *Because You Loved Me***  
(Artist: Celene Dion)

Verses:

For all those times you stood by me,  
For all the truth that you made me see,  
For all the joy you brought to my life,

For all the wrong that you made right,  
 For every dream you made come true,  
 For all the love I found in you, I'll be forever thankful baby,  
 You're the one who held me up, never let me fall.  
 You're the one who saw me through, through it all.

You gave me wings and made me fly,  
 You touched my hand I could touch the sky,  
 I lost my faith you gave it back to me,  
 You said no star was out of reach,  
 You stood by me and I stood tall, I had your love I had it all.  
 I'm grateful for each day, you gave me,  
 Maybe I don't know that much, but I know this much is true.  
 I was blessed because I was, loved by you.

Crescendo:

You were always there for me, the tender wind that carried me,  
 A light in the dark, shining your love into my life,  
 You've been my inspiration, through the lies you were the truth,  
 My world is a better place, because of you.

Refrain:

*You were my strength when I was weak,  
 You were my voice when I couldn't speak,  
 You were my eyes when I couldn't see, you saw the best there was in me,  
 Lifted me up when I couldn't reach, you gave me faith 'coz you believed,  
 I'm everything I am, because you loved me.*

**b)      *The Wind Beneath My Wings***  
 (Artist: Bette Midler)

Verses:

It must have been cold there in my shadow,  
 To never have sunlight on your face.  
 You were content to let me shine, that's your way,  
 You always walked a step behind.

So, I was the one with all the glory,  
 While you were the one with all the strength.  
 A beautiful face without a name – for so long,  
 A beautiful smile to hide the pain.

It might have appeared to go unnoticed,

But I've got it all here in my heart.  
 I want you to know I know the truth, of course I know it,  
 I would be nothing without you.

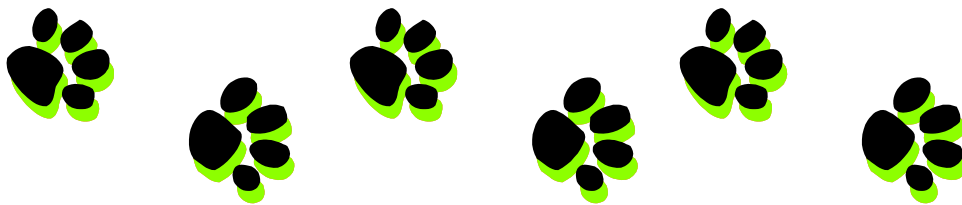
Crescendo:

Fly, fly, fly away,  
 You let me fly so high.  
 Oh, fly, fly,  
 So high against the sky, so high I almost touch the sky.  
 Thank you, thank you, thank God for you,  
 The wind beneath my wings.

Refrain:

*Did you ever know that you're my hero,  
 And everything I would like to be?  
 I can fly higher than an eagle,  
 'cause you are the wind beneath my wings.*

2. Canine



To my little white Maltese dog named “Twinkie”, a true treasure which I often take for granted, I offer the sentiment of the following song which laments various things lost after it is too late:

a) ***Big Yellow Taxi***  
 (Artists: Counting Crows & Vanessa Carleson)

Selected Verses:

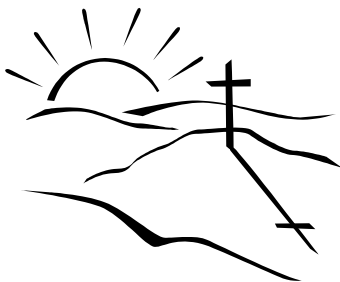
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot  
 With a pink hotel, a boutique, and a swingin' hot spot

Listen, late last night, I heard the screen door slam  
 And a big yellow taxi took my girl away

Refrain:

**Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got till its gone  
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot**

### **3. Divine**



To Jesus Christ our Lord, who actively undertook the most extreme self-negation (not for Himself, but for our sins), lead by example, and practiced what He preached, I raise the following hymn regarding ultimate transcendence:

#### **a) *I Am the Bread of Life* (Seasonal Misalette)**

Selected Verse:

I am the resurrection, I am the life.  
If you believe in me,  
even though you die,  
you shall live forever.

Refrain:

**And I will raise you up,  
and I will raise you up,  
and I will raise you up on the last day.**

### **B. Summary**

So, to all my sources of inspiration thus far, I say thank you in Italian:



## ***ABSTRACT***

---

Dissertation by: MaryAnn Fenicato, Esq.

Dissertation Director: Wilhelm S. Wurzer, Ph.D.

---

### **I. Introduction**

The time has come.

Now that the Idea of God has been declared dead, an egocentric action that opened Pandora's box, many evils plague humankind. Thus, human life has no meaning. Humanism has been devalued. Philosophy gets no respect. All Hope has been lost.

### **II. Statement of the Problem**

Philosophy must investigate exactly who declared the death of that Idea and why, who must resurrect that Idea and why, or, perhaps not, and why.

### **III. Description of Procedure or Methods**

A multifarious method will present a mystery.

First, it will differentiate between the Idea of God and God *per se* to demonstrate why that Idea is still philosophically, psychologically, etc., meaningful for humankind today. It will also reveal that Nietzsche did not declare its death alone, rather, Philosophy's entire history beginning with Descartes opened the door via: 1) Descartes' venerable provision of a rational proof of God; and 2) Philosophy's egocentric usurpation of power from that Idea for-itself, which it has yet to admit.

It will also explain the two worst evils that resultingly plague humankind today: 1) debt-capitalism, whereby humans foolishly attempt to fulfill their fundamental lack, and 2) tyrannical deconstructive freedom, which selfishly results in the opposite, slavery.



#### IV. Results

A crescendo will eventually culminate in an awesome conclusion summoning a Hegelian self-negation of Philosophy, and an Augustinian return to that Idea.

#### V. Conclusion

Surprisingly, however, at the very end, it will turn the tables on that seeming conclusion and regain respect for Philosophy *per se*, by dialectically demonstrating the opposite, that Philosophy supersedes that Idea because it can reflexively recognize and protect humankind from any and all abuse, even abuse that results from that Idea. Most importantly, the question of continued philosophical relevance and the meaning of that Idea will be left open to allow readers to reach their own conclusions by inspiring Hope.



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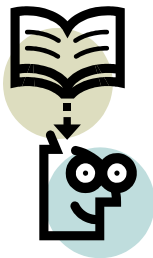
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## ***PRELUDE***

The best way to convey a point may be by analogy, metaphor or parable, as indeed, Jesus employed himself. Accordingly, the following shall be presented lyrically.

### **A. Evil as Problem, and God as Future Solution**

The following inspirational anthem describes the problem of evil amidst the world today, and with a roaring crescendo foretells the glorious day that God will solve it:

#### **1. *There Will Come A Day*** (Artist: Faith Hill)

##### Verses:

It's not easy, trying to understand  
How the world can be so cold  
Stealing the souls of man  
Cloudy skies rain down on all your dreams  
You wrestle with the fear and doubts  
Sometimes it's hard, but you've got to believe

Wars are raging  
Lives are scattered  
Innocence is lost  
Hopes are shattered  
The old are forgotten  
Children are forsaken  
In this world we're living in, is there anything sacred?

##### Crescendo:

The song will ring out down those golden streets  
The voices of the earth with the angels will sing (Hallelujah)  
Every knee will bow  
Sin will have no trace  
In the glory of His amazing grace  
Every knee will bow  
Sin will have no trace  
In the glory of His amazing grace

##### Refrain:

***There's a better place, where our Father waits***

*And every tear He'll wipe away  
 The darkness will be gone  
 The weak shall be strong  
 Hold on to your faith  
 There will come a day  
 There will come a day*



## **B. Selfless Human Hero: Present Solution**

Such a glorious day, however, has yet to come. Thus, in the interim, a human hero, gentle and kind, who humbly wouldn't seek fame by revealing his or her name, must presently prevail over evil. After all, hope that is seen is not Hope. Thus, the following song describes such a secretive, yet selfless unnamed hero, who victoriously brings hope:

### **1. *Nessun Dorma*** (Artist: Luciano Pavarotti)(emphasis added)

*Il Principe: (in Italian)*  
*Nessun dorma!... Nessun Dorma...*  
*Tu pure, o Principessa,*

*The Prince:*  
 No one sleeps!... No one sleeps!...  
 Nor do you, o princess

*nella tua fredda stanza  
guardi le stelle che tremano  
d'amore e di speranza!*

*Ma il mio mistero*

*è chiuso in me,*

***il nome mio nessun saprà!***

*No, no, sulla tua bocca lo dirò,*

*quando la luce splenderà!*

*Ed il mio bacio scoglierà*

*il silenzio che ti fa mia!*

*Coro donne:*

*Il nome suo nessun saprà...*

*E noi dovrem ahimè, morir, morir!...*

*Il Principe:*

*Dilegua, o notte! Tramontate, stelle!*

*Tramontate, stelle! All'alba **vincerò!***

***Vincerò! Vincerò!***

In your cold room

Look at the stars that tremble

With love and **hope!**

But my mystery

Is locked in me,

**My name no one will know!**

No, no only on your mouth I will reveal it,

When dawn's light will shine!

My kiss will break the silence

And make you mine!

Female choir:

**His name no one will know...**

And we shall have, alas, to die, to die...!

The Prince:

Disperse, o night! Set, you stars!

Set, you stars! With the dawn **I will win!**

**I'll win! I'll win!**



## ***FOREWARD***

(rhyme time riddle)

Move over, Superman!  
 Step aside, Wonderwoman!  
 Spiderman, take a powder!  
 Aquaman, take a shower!



Succinctly stated, sentiment same,  
 to all other known heroes who are at best, lame!  
 For, a new hero shall emerge herefrom who will put them all to shame!

Stronger than the rest,  
 Better than the best,  
 More virtuous, courageous and pure,  
 Than all the others to be sure.  
 Yet, gentle, humble and kind,  
 Who saves not the self, but all humankind.

So, come with me,  
 on the greatest of all adventures, so that you, yourself can see.  
 I challenge thee,  
 to the most courageous feat.  
 So, sit on the edge of your seat  
 For our feature film is about to begin  
 That will take you outside yourself and back again.  
 For, unmasked you will soon see that the new, true,  
 Hero's identity lies in ...\*




---

\* The hero's identity cannot be revealed at this premature point. Rather, the answer to this riddle, though presently shrouded in mystery, shall eventually unfold herefrom ...

# ***ABSTRACT***

---

Dissertation by: MaryAnn Fenicato, Esq.

Dissertation Director: Wilhelm S. Wurzer, Ph.D.

---

## **I. Introduction**

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It will also explain the two worst evils that resultingly plague humankind today: 1) debt-capitalism, whereby humans foolishly attempt to fulfill their fundamental lack, and 2) tyrannical deconstructive freedom, which selfishly results in the opposite, slavery.



#### IV. Results

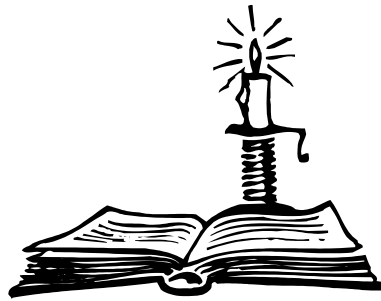
A crescendo will eventually culminate in an awesome conclusion summoning a Hegelian self-negation of Philosophy, and an Augustinian return to that Idea.

#### V. Conclusion

Surprisingly, however, at the very end, it will turn the tables on that seeming conclusion and regain respect for Philosophy *per se*, by dialectically demonstrating the opposite, that Philosophy supersedes that Idea because it can reflexively recognize and protect humankind from any and all abuse, even abuse that results from that Idea. Most importantly, the question of continued philosophical relevance and the meaning of that Idea will be left open to allow readers to reach their own conclusions by inspiring Hope.



## Chapter I: Introduction



### A. The Purpose of this Dissertation

Thinking outside, you have lifted the cover/lid of this book/box to see what is within. Before I reveal the purpose of this dissertation, please consider the following inspirational mythological tale:

---

#### Pandora's Box



According to Greek mythology, after the titan Prometheus stole fire from the heavens to help, and give it to, humankind, Zeus, the king of the Greek gods, punished both Prometheus and humankind. For the latter, he called on Hepheastus, the god of fire and forge, to fashion a woman out of marble. Aphrodite, the goddess of love, posed for it to ensure its beauty; Athena, the goddess of wisdom, breathed life into it; and Zeus gave her a box, indicating that it must never be opened by her or anyone else no matter what.

Afterward, all the other gods gave her a gift. Aphrodite taught her how to dance. Athena bestowed wisdom above all mortal standards. Apollo, the god of the sun and music, taught her to play various musical instruments. The Muses, the nine goddesses of literature, art and science, showed her how to sing. Hermes, however, the god who served as herald for all the others, taught her how to lie and how to steal, whereas Hera, the queen of the gods, gave her the last gift of curiosity.

Upon their receipt, she was named Pandora, which means “all-gifted”, and given to Epimetheus, Prometheus’ brother. Prometheus warned him not to accept her, but he did not listen. So, she stayed with him and lived blissfully for several years in a small village where people danced and sang in the sunshine all day long. They had no lack of food or water. In fact, their lives were perfect, for at that time, there was no such thing as sickness, hunger, poverty, misery, etc. All the while, however, she never forgot about the box that Zeus gave her, and his explicit instructions never to open it.

One night several years later, she sat and looked at that same box which she had placed in a corner of her home. Moonlight poured through the window, causing it to appear to glow with silvery radiance. It had a lock in front, and she had the key. Curiosity riddled her, but knowing that it would be wrong to open it, she buried it instead out in the backyard, covered it with several large stones, and went back to bed.

As she slept, however, she dreamt of opening the box and finding it filled with beautiful gems and jewelry, with which she and Epimetheus could live as a king and queen. When she awoke, she found him fast asleep. So, she ran outside, removed the rocks, dug it out with her bare hands, opened the box and threw open the lid.

First, a thick black smoke flooded out which hurt her eyes and caused her to cry out in pain. When it cleared, she looked down and saw several demons escaping. They

crawled, ran and flew out of the box and into the world. She grabbed one by hand and put it back in the box, but it bit her. She fell ill immediately and collapsed to the ground, but somehow found the strength to slam the lid shut before anything else escaped.



Suddenly, she heard a small voice inside the box asking to be let out. She looked inside the keyhole and saw a golden light, but refused regardless because she realized how many evils she had allowed to escape into the world already. The little voice persisted, and explained that it was not like the others, namely, it would alleviate the damage she had done by lessening the suffering of humankind.

So, with her last bit of strength, she lifted the lid. A small creature radiating a beautiful golden light soon stood before her, touched her, and lessened her suffering.

Afterward, it further explained that although curiosity caused her to release

various evils into the world, namely, old age, sickness, plague, misery, selfishness, greed and ugliness, it would give humankind the strength to fight them, for it was Hope.

Before she could respond, it was gone.<sup>1</sup>

---

Fear not, for the main purpose of this dissertation is to reveal where Hope really lies, which may, indeed, surprise, you ...



## B. Brief Thesis Statement

The time has come ...



In our world today, the Idea of God has been declared dead, an egocentric action which verily opened Pandora's box. Consequently, various evils plague humankind, the worst of which are: 1) debt-capitalism, whereby humans attempt, yet fail, to fulfill their fundamental lack, and 2) tyrannical deconstructive freedom, which exalts egocentricity and chaos, and results in its opposite, slavery. Basically, human life has no meaning, purpose or goal. Humanism has been devalued. Hope has been lost.

We need, therefore, a hero to humbly and selflessly declare the death of the death of the Idea of God via self-negation, which will result in positive resurrection.

Eventually herein, that hero's name will be revealed, and much more...

## C. Supporting Arguments

Specifically, Philosophy needs to admit that Descartes egologically opened the door, and other philosophers thereafter led the way, to Nietzsche's declaration of the death of the Idea of God. It also needs to correct various philosophical stereotypes, and to prevent abuses of philosophical concepts by both philosophers and non. Most of all, Philosophy needs to create, or recreate, self-respect by highlighting its unique power of critique whereby it can prevent intellectual abuse conducted even under the Idea of God, and in so doing, recapture hope, and provide inspiration to us all.

## D. Methodology

### 1. Thematic Text: Soaring, Flying and Playing



According to Nietzsche, thinking is “soaring, flying”.<sup>2</sup> I whole-heartedly agree, and would like to suggest to readers that on earth, it is the highest type of transcendence. More specifically, also as per Nietzsche, philosophy is “playing”. As derived from Middle English “*pleien*,” and old English “*plegan*,” the verb “play” means to be active, to move lightly, rapidly or erratically, to flutter in flux, indeed, like sunlight playing on waves.<sup>3</sup>



Accordingly, a thematic approach was purposefully selected to allow the reader to partake in such intellectual pleasures. Such an approach was also chosen in light of the type of student who is most likely to read this dissertation hereafter, namely, students that



are taking an introductory class in philosophy, philosophy as an elective, etc., to inspire them to seek it further.

Most importantly, however, it was selected because only a thematic approach could do justice to the delicate, multi-faceted subject matter hereof. It also does a great justice to the reader, also, by providing a brief sample<sup>4</sup> of many philosophical concepts so that the reader can personally adjudicate (be his or her **own** judge) by choosing which to further pursue in the future.



## 2. Idea Disclaimer and Contact Information

Please realize that the undersigned did not have absolute discretion in writing this dissertation. As a result, this dissertation contains certain parts, concepts, etc., that were certainly never my idea. Please, therefore, hold me harmless from those that were not. In the event that you would like to know which were, or were not my idea, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at: [mafenicato@hotmail.com](mailto:mafenicato@hotmail.com).

## 3. Lyrical Lifts and Forward Riddle in Rhyme

Lyrics have also been provided as preludes, interludes, and a postlude, to uplift the text and to facilitate the aforementioned soaring, flying and playing, in general

agreement with Nietzsche's sentiment, with which Schopenhauer also agreed, that life without music is a "mistake".<sup>5</sup>



Nietzsche seemingly preferred the underlying music, rather than lyrics, which he deemed Dionysian because it has the least form, and is bound only by time, whereas lyrics portray Apollonian images.<sup>6</sup> However, in The Gay Science,<sup>7</sup> he used many rhymes as a prelude, and included an appendix of song lyrics.

In tune therewith, yet also creating my own individual style, rhyme was used to form the riddle in the Forward section herein, instead. Moreover, rather than using songs in a rear appendix, and in keeping with Roman Catholic mass traditions, I have placed them throughout this dissertation, as a prelude, various interludes, and a postlude.

Most importantly, this demonstrates that this dissertation will not be a one-sided denunciation of Nietzsche's declaration of the death of the Idea of God, etc. Rather, it will also celebrate, honor and continue these and other good things that he did.

#### **4. Citations to Class Notes: Emphasis on Selfless Action**

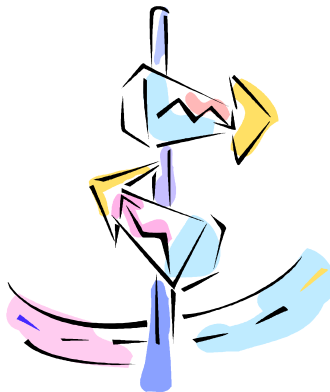
Endnotes hereto will cite class notes in addition to prose texts in order to emphasize the need for selfless action and interaction. For, prose text citation is typically undertaken in an egological Cartesian solitude, whereas active listening and taking notes

during class not only involves interaction, but also requires the self-negation of distracting thoughts, and at times, considerable discipline.



## 5. Dialectical Dualism: A New Beginning

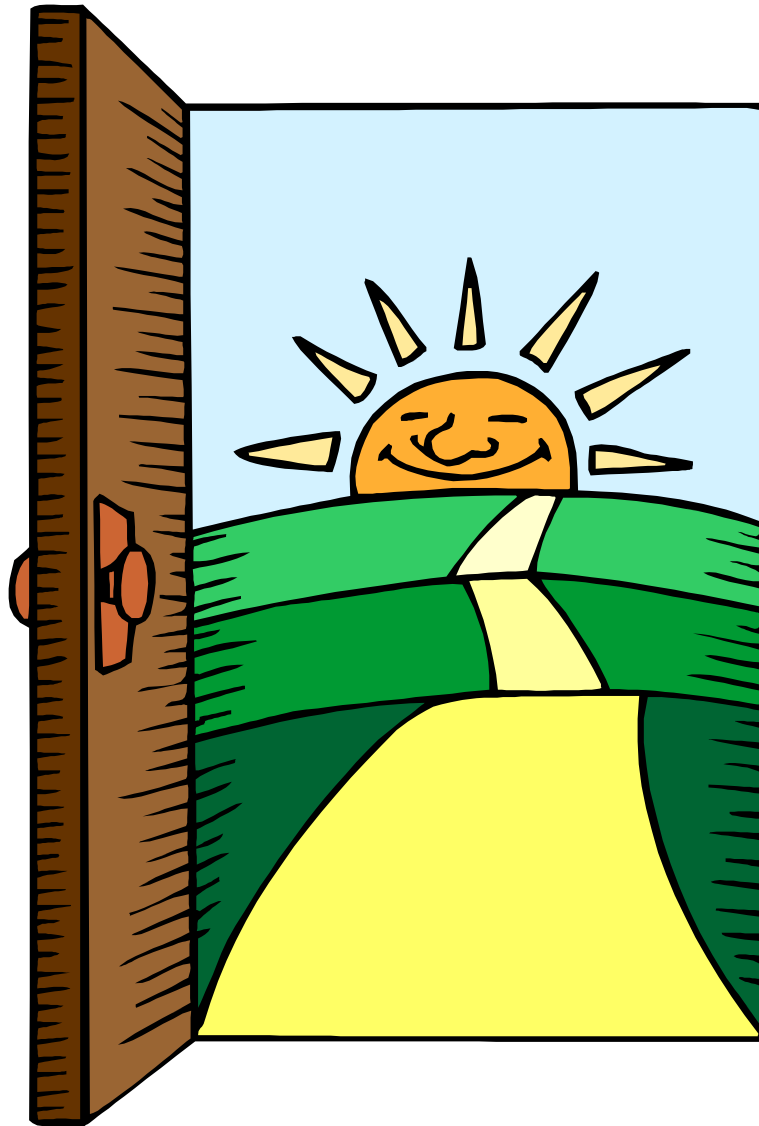
This dissertation will undertake a seemingly one-sided stance in order to prevent readers from becoming lost or ensnared in the brambles of opposing arguments.



For example, consider whether “Philosophy is Metaphysics.”<sup>8</sup> On one hand, the word “Metaphysics” could, indeed, be substituted for the word “Philosophy” from the beginning of this dissertation through page 156<sup>9</sup> (*see* the detailed explanation in Chapter I, section E). On the other hand, Philosophy also includes other philosophical traditions such as nihilism, which is, indeed, the antithesis of Metaphysics. Moreover, another Philosophical tradition besides Metaphysics could emerge herefrom... Thus, the undersigned shall respectfully decline to make such a substitution which could

dangerously restrict the power of critique, the very core of all Philosophical thinking, which should not be enslaved or fettered, but rather, should remain “freely open”.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, instead, this dissertation shall selflessly encourage readers to reach their own conclusions and to recognize even more questions, so that this dissertation does not become an end in and of itself, for-itself, but rather, for others, a new beginning ...



## Chapter II: The Idea of God

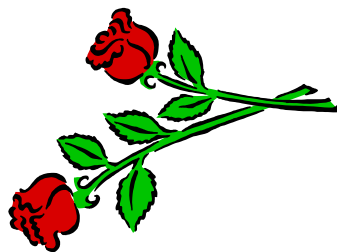


## A. Introduction

The Idea of God beautifully bears all the sweet and splendid colors of the rainbow, and indeed, the style, cut and clarity of the most exquisite diamond.



Admittedly, one mere mortal such as myself could never describe all the facets, or do justice to the entirety. Accordingly, this chapter shall depict that Idea only through one particular lens, namely, it shall explain why the Idea of God continues, and will always have meaning for humankind psychologically, socially and culturally, both for oneself and for others, as history unfolds into the future like an ever blooming rose.



In order to do so, however, a proper foundation must first be laid via the following bifurcation: the Idea of God, which as a product of humankind is imperfect, deconstructable, and indeed, capable of being declared dead, must be distinguished from God *per se*, which instead is pure essence, presence, perfection, indestructible, and impervious to death. The latter, in fact, does not even need us to recognize its Meaning,

whereas humans desperately need the former in many ways, but may be too proud or egotistical to admit it.

For humans, the necessity of the Idea of God can also be basically bifurcated into two categories: 1) for themselves, and 2) for others. In short, humans need it for themselves, for their own personal psychological development, for self-actualization, to transcend the pain, problems and evils of this world, via hope and inspiration, and most importantly, for elevation out of selfishness.

For, humans can only realize that they need the Idea of God for the second reason, for others, after they have recognized the need for self-negation and selflessness, instead. If so, the Idea of God facilitates social and cultural relations with others, and serves as a model for laws consented-to voluntarily, which provide protection, order and peace. If not, humans will relegate themselves into a lower Darwinian state of survival of the fittest, characterized by chaos, narcissistic selfishness, unrest, fear, meaninglessness, terror, disorder, i.e., in their own little world, a Lucifer state of personal psychological madness. In such a state, humans will never elevate themselves to enjoy the worth of relations with others in this world, or higher to God, *per se*, thereafter.

Heaven, therefore, can't wait. The stairway must be constructed with quality materials and workmanship here on earth according to the very best specifications, namely, the Idea of God. Join me, thus, in a joyful discussion thereof.

## **B. God, *per se***

Before we can construct our highway to heaven herein, we must compare and contrast the Idea of God with God, *per se*.

*Per se*, God lies outside of this world. Accordingly, we mortal humans can never know His true essence. We can, basically, only have an Idea of God for us.

However, in relation hereto, it should be noted that God *per se* is impervious to change, destructibility or death. Most importantly, although God *per se* does not need us, He (or She) serves as the ultimate, perfect and impeccable model, and the most proper and sound foundation for our Idea of God, which in stark contrast, is quite imperfect, deconstructible, and indeed, has already been declared dead.

Since, in comparison, humankind desperately needs the Idea of God, a thorough discussion thereof follows.

### **C. The Idea of God**

#### **1. Philosophical Concepts**

Discussion of the Idea of God may very well be also best left to the theologians. Regardless, however, many philosophers have courageously and selflessly undertaken such a virtuous task. Presented herein, therefore, shall be a select few which directly relate to my theme.

For the Ancient Greeks, the Idea of God was basically metaphysical Beauty,<sup>11</sup> the unchanging Form that serves as the true model for all ephemeral manifestations. As for Augustine, the Idea of God was the way to happiness<sup>12</sup> and rest, the sweet, delightful, gentle breath of truth.<sup>13</sup>

According to Aquinas, God's divine and eternal law serves as a model for human law, and explains why the latter cannot control all vices.<sup>14</sup> For Descartes, God was perfection and certitude, and perhaps more importantly, not an evil deceiver.<sup>15</sup> For Pascal, God was "Everlasting joy for one day's tribulation on earth,"<sup>16</sup> i.e., compensation for the painful deaths we humans suffer and die on earth every day. For Kant, God was Sublime morality.<sup>17</sup> For Derrida, God is *differànce*,<sup>18</sup> namely, beyond Presence and absence. Indeed, it could also be argued that God is the Spirit that Hegel spoke of,<sup>19</sup> and



the ultimate Being that Heidegger discussed in relation to *Dasein*, the being of human being.<sup>20</sup>

Of all aforementioned, perhaps Augustine said it best: God is rest from the pain and anguish of ephemeral temporal extension, i.e., from the foolish pursuit of temporal things which will end, leaving us with nothing, the painful loss of which will leave us flat on our backs, and brings us to our knees: “Oh God Thou hast created us for Thyself so that our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee.”<sup>21</sup>

According to Augustine, we find God within ourselves, in a mirror inside our soul. That reflection affords us a choice of free will: we can either use it to inspire us to elevate ourselves higher to God, or we can ignore it, remain in the selfish realm of worldly desires, and thus, lower and enslave ourselves in the evil consequences thereof.<sup>22</sup> Most importantly, God is Hope<sup>23</sup> with a capital “H”, namely, that which inspires us to transcend the bonds of servitude of this world, and to elevate ourselves higher to God in heaven, our ultimate reward.

## **2. Psychological, Social and Cultural Aspects**

Succinctly summarized, each human desperately needs the Idea of God for him or herself, and for others. Dialectically, however, development and elevation of the self will only occur when and if the egocentric or egological self negates itself and acts selflessly towards others, and eventually enters the highest relationship of all with an other, i.e., with God *per se*.

Specifically, the Idea of God is necessary for each individual’s psychological development out of base animalistic tendencies to self-actualization. During such development and self-actualization, the individual must also mature and realize that he or she is not an island.



Rather, social and cultural relationships with others must be cultivated, and the laws of such a society, etc. must be obeyed, such that no individual may attempt to be a lone lawless wolf. Otherwise, the foolish pursuit of egocentricity will only result in personal psychological madness, i.e., one will retard one's growth as a person, limit one's monumental possibilities, and relegate oneself to slavery. Freedom, therefore, lies in self-negation.

Thus, to avoid such slavery, and to construct our highway to heaven herein, each of the aforementioned most important aspects of the Idea of God, namely, psychological, social and cultural, shall now be further explained in turn.

#### **a) Psychological Aspects**

According to the well-respected psychologist Abraham Maslow, humans have a hierarchy of needs, which he placed into five categories: 1) physiological; 2) safety; 3) love; 4) esteem; and 5) self-actualization.

The lowest category, physiological, includes the most basic of all needs, namely, air, water, food, sleep, etc., which if not satisfied, cause physical sickness, irritation, discomfort and pain. Only after these have been alleviated can one elevate oneself.

The second category, safety, is more psychological, for it has to do with establishing a mental feeling of stability, security and consistency in a chaotic world,

calling for law and order. It is also at this level that we begin to interact more with others, seeking not positive relationships with them, but rather, negative protection from them. Thus, positive relationships in the next category, love are only possible after we pass through the second category and no longer fear others. Such positive relationships, of course, concern our need to belong to groups, and to receive love and acceptance from others in return, i.e., our need to be needed.

The fourth category, esteem, has to do with personal accomplishments and with others' recognition thereof. According to Maslow, above and beyond the sense of belongingness in the third level, this affords a feeling of power over others, which indeed, can be used wisely or abused.

Taken together, all needs in the first four categories are actually deficiencies wherefore individuals act selfishly to satisfy such cravings. Thus, it is only after a person develops and progresses to the last category, self-actualization, that one will realize that blocking personal gratification will result in greater good. If so, individuals will not only compromise their desires to maximize their own potential, but also that of others. Most importantly, at this more mature juncture they will recognize the benefits of higher pleasures, namely, knowledge, peace, aesthetic experience, etc., and eventually, oneness with God.<sup>24</sup>

### 1) Physiological Needs



The Idea of God assists us in alleviating many of those needs, and much more.

First and foremost, it allows us to escape and transcend the pain of unfulfilled physiological needs. Indeed, even if we try very hard, we will simply not be able to get everything that we want. People, things, prices, time, etc., will always stand in our way, causing us instead to die a little death everyday, or perhaps, many times per minute. Accordingly, consider the demonstrative lyrics of the following musical interlude, which admits all that we lack, and longs not only for comfort and peace, but also for an escape:

*Angel*

(Artist: Sarah McLaughlin)



Verses:

Spend all your time waiting  
for that second chance  
for a break that would make it okay  
there's always some reason  
to feel not good enough  
and it's hard at the end of the day  
I need some distraction  
oh beautiful release

memories seep from my veins  
let me be empty  
oh and weightless then maybe  
I'll find some peace tonight

So tired of the straight line  
and everywhere you turn  
there's vultures and thieves at your back  
the storm keeps on twisting  
you keep on building the lies  
that you make up for all that you lack

it don't make no difference  
 escaping one last time  
 it's easier to believe  
 in this sweet madness oh  
 this glorious sadness that brings me to my knees

Refrain:

*In the arms of the angel  
 fly away from here  
 from this dark cold hotel room  
 and the endlessness that you feel  
 you are pulled from the wreckage  
 of your silent reverie  
 in the arms of the angel  
 may you find some comfort here*

## 2) Safety Needs

Our psychological needs for safety, as per Maslow's second level, are also assisted by the Idea of God, albeit indirectly. For, it will not help you to directly catch a thief or to stop a burglar.



But, it will help you to indirectly assign meaning to the evil within this world, and it grants compensation for our sufferings afterward. Thus, it heals us and assuages our fears right now by granting comfort, peace, rest etc., in knowing that our suffering will be recompensed and rewarded in the afterlife.

Consider, therefore, why the messages of the following two religious hymns, which speak of shelter, protection, etc., are, in fact, congregational favorites:

***Be Not Afraid***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Verses:

You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst,  
You shall wander far in safety, though you do not know the way.  
You shall speak your words to foreign men, and they will understand.  
You shall see the face of God and live.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown.  
If you walk amid the burning flames, you shall not be harmed.  
If you stand before the power of hell and death is at your side,  
Know that I am with you through it all.

Blessed are your poor, for the Kingdom shall be theirs.  
Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh.  
And if wicked men insult and hate you all because of Me,  
Blessed, blessed are you.

Refrain:

***Be not afraid, I go before you always  
Come follow me, and I will give you rest.***

***On Eagle's Wings***  
(Seasonal Missalette)



Verses:

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,  
Who abide in his shadow for life,  
Say to the Lord, "My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!"

The snare of the fowler will never capture you,  
And famine will bring you no fear;  
Under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield.

You need not fear the terror of the night,  
Nor the arrow that flies by day;  
Though thousands fall around you, near you it shall not come.

For to his angels he's given a command  
To guard you in all of your ways;

Upon their hands they will bear you up,  
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Refrain:

*And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,  
Bear you on the breath of dawn,  
Make you to shine like the sun,  
And hold you in the palm of his hand.*

### 3) Love, Esteem and Self-Actualization



Since Maslow's categories of love, esteem and self-actualization interrelate, so does the assistance given by the Idea of God. Taken together, it is at these higher levels that an individual needs the Idea of God even more to attain greater types of good above and beyond the foregoing.

Specifically, in order to succeed in attaining relationships with others, and personal achievements that will afford esteem from others, one needs to compromise one's selfish interests, first. One must also follow social morays and heed legal rules. An individual, therefore, will never be able to reach the highest level of self-actualization, namely, the maximization of one's personal potential and possibilities, which include an

ultimate relationship with God *per se*, unless he or she develops through the lower levels of love and esteem through humility. The social and cultural aspects of those two lower levels shall now be further explained.

### **b) Social and Cultural Aspects**

Just as we develop personal ways to deal with the problems of life, escape and elevate ourselves higher, we also band together to do so as a species, socially and culturally. The Idea of God, therefore, assists us in setting up a belief system which allows society to function, serving as a model for laws, etc. All of this, however, arises out of our psychological needs, therefore, discussion shall commence from a psychological perspective.



Without a socially constructed belief system, the individual remains in a lower state of “anomy,” i.e., a “Lucifer state psychological” where one can get lost in the wilderness or vast forest of meaninglessness, terror, chaos, disorder, and in a word, madness. Basically, life has no meaning because it has no foundation, no ultimate legitimization.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, to relieve our sense of anomy, we construct a “nomos,” a belief system that affords a sense of security, law and order. It is like a social fabric that binds individuals together. It is also a clearing, a light that allows us to see. It basically provides answers to our biggest ultimate questions about the purpose of life, death, etc.



To create such a nomos, we base our beliefs on what society finds most important, namely, on God (the best Idea), or on “God terms,” other terms or ideas that function as a god for us. The latter will ultimately fail, however, because they are not based on the best, highest and ultimate legitimization and foundation for humans, which is instead the Idea of God.

First and foremost, the Idea of God serves as the best model for human laws which are essential to the creation and continuation of any society or culture. Basically, humankind voluntarily consents to law and order to get out of a state of nature, which requires Darwinian survival of the fittest. Accordingly, we compromise ourselves and consent thereto quite like entering a voluntary social contract.



Human laws, therefore, will do the best justice to humankind if humankind models them after the divine and eternal law of God *per se*, which admittedly, we can never fully know, but can only aspire to. We can, however, base them also on natural law, an intermediary level which includes the types of laws that all humans everywhere would agree to, such as the deterrence of theft, murder, etc. Even if so modeled, though, human laws will never cover all vices,<sup>26</sup> and innocent persons may even be punished because a human judge cannot see inside another person’s soul to find the truth.<sup>27</sup>

Accordingly, no socially constructed nomos or belief system, including human law, is infallible. Rather, all are merely modeled after, or based upon, something that is

perfect, namely God *per se*. This includes the Idea of God itself, therefore, as we journey toward self-actualization and higher on the road to God *per se*, we must also discuss the seeming imperfections of the Idea of God so that we are not led astray.

### 3. Hurtful Aspects?

Despite the Idea of God (and of the existence of God *per se*), evil exists in this world, regardless. More importantly, virtuous people must suffer from evil even if they never stray from the right path. Thus, the problem of evil must be explained so that we do not abandon that road altogether.

The philosopher who provided the best guidance, in my opinion, is Augustine. In his Confessions, he explained that evil is not a personified devil with a pitchfork.



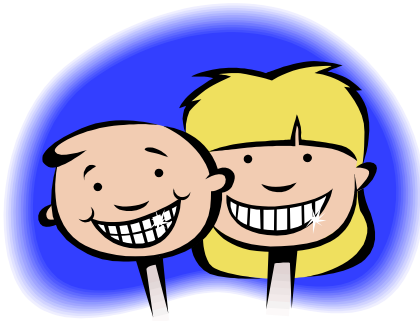
Rather, it is a privation, a lack of goodness that is simply missing. This does a great deal for our psychological sense of safety, because we need not fear an actual evil other. Instead, we need only to make the right choices ourselves, for in his On the Free Choice of the Will, he further explained that evil is, instead, the consequence that befalls us when we, who have free will to choose either good or bad, opt for the latter. Thus, most evil is easily avoided by remaining on the right road of reason which leads us directly to God *per se*.<sup>28</sup>

Descartes was also helpful in explaining why God could not be an evil deceiver. He began by stating that his Idea of God was basically an idea of perfection. Afterward,

he reasoned that perfection is perfect, complete, etc. in and of itself, thus, Perfection would have no need to deceive others, whatsoever. Thus, he concluded with certitude that neither God *per se*, nor his Idea of God, includes any aspect of evil.<sup>29</sup>

Both Augustine and Descartes, therefore, would agree that evil is entirely separate from God *per se*, and our Idea thereof. Augustine, however, was all the more helpful for the foregoing reasons, which inspire us onward and upward toward God *per se*.

#### **D. Happiness is ...**



Many people think that happiness lies in love. After all, love was the apparent topic of Plato's Symposium. As subsequently explained therein, however, love is nothing but a "lack," a very important philosophical concept that shall be further discussed in Chapter IV hereof. For now, suffice it to say that such a lack can be easily exploited, and can lead us away from the right path to God. True and lasting happiness therefore, is the latter.

Specifically, as Augustine explained in his Contra Academicos, the right way of life, which leads to truth, and knowledge of things both human and divine, which have reference to a happy life. Moreover, it is the diligent search for truth linked to that which is best in us, which (in turn) results in a happy life on account of the peace of mind (rest) which it affords. He was, of course, providing seven different definitions of wisdom, but it stands to reason that one would not even search for such reason in the first place if one

did not seek to be closer to God *per se*. Thus, happiness is the desire to be close to God *per se*, i.e., the highest elevation.

Kant viewed happiness not as something we automatically deserve, but rather, as something that we must strive for, merit and earn: “do that through which thou becomest worthy to be happy”.<sup>30</sup> We can only do so by striving to be close to God.

## **E. Humanism**

Above and beyond all the foregoing, the reason that the Idea of God continues to have meaning for humankind concerns the philosophical concept and tradition of humanism. Succinctly stated, it continues to have meaning because its meaning, in turn, gives meaning to humankind.

As explained by Vattimo in his work, The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Postmodern Culture, humankind has value only in relation to the highest value of all, the Idea of God. Thus, humankind is quickly devalued and reduced to the lower level of any other thing, animate or not, if the highest value, the Idea of God, is removed, declared dead, erased, etc. Humankind only has a higher value when it sees itself as an image of that highest value. Thus, by removing that value, humankind devalues itself, and affirms a profane value of secularization, instead.

In such a state of secularization, each individual is nothing but a culture clown<sup>31</sup> that merely performs groundless, meaningless rituals<sup>32</sup>. Such a secular state of nihilism consumes Being in value, and replaces the fundamental Idea of God with progress, with the “new.” Thereby, humanism, the philosophical tradition which so exalts humans, is also devalued and lost.<sup>33</sup> Thus, and perhaps ironically, humanism equals metaphysics, for, as Heidegger said himself, “philosophy is metaphysics.”<sup>34</sup> In short, the death of the Idea of God means the death of humanism, whereas affirmation of the former elevates the

latter. Put another way, we only have meaning if we give meaning to the Idea of God.

#### **F. The Specific Idea of Jesus Christ, Our Savior**

The Idea of God also specifically incorporates the Idea of our savior, Jesus Christ. Discussion of this Idea is, of course, best left up to the theologians, also. But, for the thematic purposes of this dissertation, and more importantly, to explicate the specific source of Meaning for our lives, various important facets shall be highlighted herein. Upon addressing each individually, they will then be taken together to demonstrate that, in comparison to the general aspects of the Idea of God heretofore discussed, which will intertwine and intermingle with the following, Jesus provides a specific grounding, Meaning, foundation and base for us exactly because he had the courage to make the ultimate self-sacrifice for us.

Jesus died on the cross for our sins so that we may not only live, but live happily in the hereafter. That imports the greatest Meaning of all to our lives, for it is why we live now, and why, if we follow Him, we shall continue to live evermore.

#### **1. Low = High**

##### **a. Inverted Reality**

It is well-known that Jesus was born not in a palace, but in a manger, not in fine robes, but in swaddling rags. This facet has incredible import for those who are poor, lowly, etc. He did not exclude such people, but rather, welcomed them into both his then-presence in reality, and in the future, into the Kingdom of God.

Moreover, he explained that those who suffer most on earth will receive the highest rewards in heaven. Accordingly, He inverted the social structure or case system of reality by blessing the poor and teaching them that one day they shall be exalted pursuant to the true justice that will be rendered unto them in heaven. This provides

meaning to their suffering, and provides them with Hope with which to carry on.

Such is the subject of the following hymns:

***Blest Are They***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Verses:

Blest are they, the poor in spirit,  
Theirs is the kingdom of God.  
Blest are they, full of sorrow,  
They shall be consoled.

Blest are they, the lowly ones,  
They shall inherit the earth.  
Blest are they who hunger and thirst,  
They shall have their fill.

Blest are they who show mercy,  
Mercy shall be theirs.  
Blest are they, the pure of heart,  
They shall see God!

Blest are they who seek peace;  
they are the children of God.  
Blest are they who suffer in faith,  
The glory of God is theirs.

Blest are you who suffer hate,  
all because of me.  
Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom;  
Shine for all to see.

Refrain:

**Rejoice and be glad!**  
**Blessed are you, holy are you!**  
**Rejoice and be glad!**  
**Yours is the kingdom of God!**

***We Are the Light of the World***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Verses:

Blessed are they who are poor in spirit,  
 Theirs is the Kingdom of God.  
 Bless us, O Lord, make us poor in spirit;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Blessed are they who are meek and humble,  
 They will inherit the earth.  
 Bless us, O Lord, make us meek and humble;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Blessed are they who will mourn in sorrow,  
 They will be comforted.  
 Bless us, O Lord, when we share their sorrow;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Bless those who hunger and thirst for justice,  
 They will be satisfied.  
 Bless us, O Lord, hear our cry for justice;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Blessed are they who show others mercy,  
 They will know mercy too.  
 Bless us, O Lord, hear our cry for mercy;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Blessed are hearts that are clean and holy,  
 They will behold the Lord.  
 Bless us, O Lord, make us pure and holy;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Blessed are they who bring peace among us,  
 They are the children of God.  
 Bless us, O Lord, may your peace be with us;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Bless those who suffer from persecution,  
 Theirs is the Kingdom of God.  
 Bless us, O Lord, when they persecute us;  
 Bless us, O Lord, our God.

Refrain:

**We are the light of the world,  
 May our light shine before all,  
 That they may see the good that we do,  
 And give glory to God.**

**b. Humble Hero**

The Idea of Jesus is also important because it demonstrates that David can slay Goliath, that inner strength of character shall ultimately prevail, not physical brawn, that the pen is mightier than the sword. This is because Jesus saved us by and through humble self-sacrifice, not by war, fire or sword. He was a mere babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, not a barbarian. In fact, He did not fight at all. Rather, He turned the other cheek when wronged. He chose to face pain rather than egocentrically or egologically usurp transient power. In so doing, He remained true to his unique purpose, to save humankind and pave our way to heaven.

Most importantly, He prevailed over evil exactly because he remained subservient to a greater ideal, the salvation of all humankind, an ideal far greater than His or any other egocentric or egological self. Rather than trying to usurp undue power, he did the right thing and was rewarded with resurrection. He made the right choice, thus, both He and we shall not die, but live forever. Thus, we have Meaning specifically because of Him. So, we should rejoice in our mutual victory, praising and honoring Him, and God who gave Him to us thusly:

***To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Verses:

To Jesus Christ, our sov'reign King  
Who is the world's salvation,  
All praise and homage do we bring  
And thanks and adoration.

Your reign extend, O King benign,  
To ev'ry land and nation;  
For in your kingdom, Lord devine,  
Alone we find salvation.



To you and to your Church, great King,  
 We pledge our hearts' oblation;  
 Until before your throne we sing  
 In endless jubilation.

Refrain:

**Christ Jesus, Victor!**  
**Christ Jesus Ruler!**  
**Christ Jesus, Lord and Redeemer!**

*All the Earth*  
 (Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain:

**All the earth, proclaim the Lord;**  
**Sing your praise to God.**

Verses:

Serve you the Lord,  
 Heart filled with gladness.  
 Come into God's presence singing for joy!

Know that the Lord  
 is our creator.  
 Yes, God is our Father; we are his own.

We are the sheep  
 Of the green pasture  
 For we are God's people; chosen by God.

Come to the gates  
 Bringing thanksgiving;  
 O enter the courtyards singing in praise.

Out Lord is good,  
 With love enduring;  
 God's word is abiding now with us all.

Honor and praise  
 be to the Father,  
 The Son, and the Spirit, world without end.

***Alleluia! Sing to Jesus***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus, His the scepter, his the throne;  
Alleluia! His the triumph, His the victory alone;  
Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion Thunder like a mighty flood,  
Jesus out of ev'ry nation Has redeemed us by his blood.

Alleluia! Not as orphans Are we left in sorrow now;  
Alleluia! He is near us, Faith believes, nor questions how;  
Through the cloud from sight received him When the forty days were o'er,  
Shall our hearts forget his promise, "I am with you evermore"?

***Lift High the Cross***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain:

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,  
Till all the world adore his sacred name.**

Selected Verses:

Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod,  
Our King victorious, Christ the Son of God.

Led on their way by this triumphant sign,  
The hosts of God in glorious ranks combine.

***Joyful, Joyful We Adore You***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

Joyful, joyful, we adore you, God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before you, Op'ning to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day!

All your works with joy surround you, Earth and heav'n reflect your rays,  
Stars and angels sing around you, Center of unbroken praise;  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, Praising you eternally!

***The King Shall Come***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

The King shall come when morning dawns  
And light triumphant breaks;  
When beauty gilds the eastern hills  
And life to joy awakes.

Not, as of old, a little Child,  
To suffer and to die,  
But crowned with glory like the sun  
That lights the morning sky.

---

**c. Foundation**

As aforementioned, Jesus grounded our lives in Meaning by dying for our sins. That is why we suffer on earth, to prove ourselves worthy of heaven. In fact, the greater we suffer in this world, the greater our reward will be in heaven. The Buddhists say that all is suffering. Thus, with Jesus we know why we do so, we are aware of its Meaning, of its foundation. Accordingly, He is our ultimate, true foundation:

***The Church's One Foundation***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;  
She is his new creation, By water and the Word.  
From heav'n he came and sought her To be his holy bride;  
With his own blood he bought her, And for her life he died.

Elect from ev'ry nation, Yet one o'er all the earth,  
Her charter of salvation, One Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy name she blesses, Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses, With ev'ry grace endued.

**d. Strength**

As such an ultimate foundation, Jesus specifically supports us by giving us

strength because none of the suffering that we might endure could ever come close to His. Thus, we realize that in contrast, we have it easy. Contemplating His strength, in turn, gives us strength:

***O Lord, I Am Not Worthy***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

O Lord, I am not worthy  
That thou shou'dst come to me;  
But speak the words of comfort;  
My spirit healed shall be.

O come, all you who labor  
In sorrow and in pain;  
Come, eat this bread from heaven;  
Thy peace and strength regain.

**e.      Role Model**

To carry on amidst a world of suffering, humankind needs a role model. Jesus is the best of the best. Thus, when life gets us down, and we are weary, we should ask not to be exalted, but rather, to be servants, like He. We should not try to escape our true purpose, but rather, take up our crosses willingly:

***Make Us True Servants***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

Make us true servants to all those in need,  
Filled with compassion in thought, word, and deed;  
Loving our neighbor, whatever the cost,  
Feeding the hungry and finding the lost.

Lord, make us prophets to cry out the way,  
Telling the nations of mercy's new day.  
Let us break barriers of hatred and scorn,  
Speaking of hope to all people forlorn.

***Now We Remain***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain:

**We hold the death of our Lord deep in our hearts.  
Living, now we remain with Jesus, the Christ.**

Selected Verses:

Once we were people afraid,  
lost in the night.  
Then by your cross we were saved;  
Dead became living, life from your giving.

Something which we have known,  
Something we've touched,  
What we have seen with our eyes:  
This we have heard, life-giving Word.

***Take Up Your Cross***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

Take up your cross, the Savior said,  
If you would my disciple be;  
Take up your cross with willing heart,  
And humbly follow after me.

Take up your cross, let not its weight  
Fill your weak spirit with alarm;  
My strength shall bear your spirit up,  
And brace your heart, and nerve your arm.

---

If so, we will be uplifted, satisfied, and rewarded in heaven:

***You Are Mine***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

I will come to you in the silence,  
I will lift you from all your fear.

You will hear my voice  
 I claim you as my choice,  
 Be still and know I am here.

I am hope for all who are hopeless,  
 I am eyes for all who long to see.  
 In the shadows of the night,  
 I will be your light,  
 Come and rest in me.

Refrain:

**Do not be afraid, I am with you.  
 I have called you each by name.  
 Come and follow me,  
 I will bring you home;  
 I love you and you are mine.**

*Gift of Finest Wheat*  
 (Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain

**You satisfy the hungry heart  
 With gift of finest wheat;  
 Come, give to us, O saving Lord,  
 The bread of life to eat.**

Selected Verses:

As when the shepherd calls his sheep,  
 They know and heed his voice,  
 So when you call your fam'ly Lord,  
 We follow and rejoice.

With joyful lips we sing to you  
 Our praise and gratitude,  
 That you should count us worthy, Lord,  
 To share this heav'nly food.

Is not the cup we bless and share  
 The blood of Christ outpoured?  
 Do not one cup, one loaf, declare  
 Our oneness in the Lord?

***Eye Has Not Seen***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain:

**Eye has not seen, ear has not heard  
What God has ready for those who love him  
Spirit of love, come, give us the mind of Jesus;  
Teach us the wisdom of God.**

Selected verses:

When pain and sorrow weigh us down,  
Be near to us, O Lord;  
Forgive the weakness of our faith,  
And bear us up within your peaceful word.

Our lives are but a single breath,  
We flower and we fade;  
Yet all our days are in your hands,  
So we return in love what love has made.

**f. Love**

Love. Love not of self. Jesus is such Love with a capital “L”. He loved us so much that he willingly died for our sins, the ultimate self-sacrifice, the ultimate Love. Similarly, rather than loving ourselves to the detriment of all else, we should aspire to a higher love by and through Jesus, who is the way to the highest love -- of God.

***They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,  
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,  
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,  
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,  
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our Land:

Refrain:

**And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

***Whatsoever You Do***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain:

**Whatsoever you do to the least of my people, that you do unto me.**

Selected Verses:

When I was hungry, you gave me to eat;  
When I was thirsty, you gave me to drink.  
Now enter into the home of my Father.

When I was weary, you helped me find rest;  
When I was anxious, you calmed all my fears.  
Now enter into the home of my Father.

When I was little, you taught me to read;  
When I was lonely, you gave me your love.  
Now enter into the home of my Father.

***Where Charity and Love Prevail***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

Where charity and love prevail,  
There God is ever found;  
Brought here together by Christ's love,  
By love are we thus bound.  
With grateful joy and holy fear  
God's charity we learn;  
Let us with heart and mind and soul  
Now love God in return.

***We Have Been Told***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Refrain:

**We have been told, we've seen his face,**



**And heard his voice alive in our hearts;  
 “Live in my love with all your heart.  
 As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you.”**

Selected Verses:

“I am the vine, you are the branches,  
 And all who live in me will bear great fruit.”

“You are my friends if you keep my commands;  
 No longer slaves, I call you friends.”

“No greater love is there than this:  
 To lay down one’s life for a friend.”

## **2. Resurrection**

Jesus died selflessly, and was rewarded with resurrection. More than mere worldly life, he gained life everlasting, both for Himself and for us. In so doing, he gave Meaning to Himself, and to us. He will continue to serve as the best role model, of the highest type of Love. Thus, by giving us His only Son, God also loved us so much that he sacrificed his only Son. Jesus is the best role model, the Idea of which can never die, but rather, will live without pain, sorrow or strive, thriving, blooming and unfolding as Meaning evermore.

## **G. Culture Clowns**

If such Meaning is erased, we can also easily become puppets of “Culture Clowns”.<sup>35</sup> Far worse than merely watching a “virtual circus”,<sup>36</sup> we can become servants to culture. This occurs when we allow our culture to establish meaningless ways in which we should think, act, live, love, etc. This requires us to put on a mask or a costume whereby we could try to fit in, for as Shakespeare correctly surmised:

All the world is a stage,  
 And all the men and women merely players:  
 They have their exits and their entrances;  
 And one man in his time plays many parts.<sup>37</sup>

In so doing, we try to be “cool”, to keep up appearances, unwittingly allowing representation to take precedence over presence.<sup>38</sup> Humanism, therefore “turns to a new paradigm of perception”<sup>39</sup> in which we care all too much about how we look to others and what others think of us. We see what others do and we try to be just like them. We see them strike different “majestic poses”, and thus, we get drawn into inauthentic “picturing self-justification”,<sup>40</sup> whereby we rationalize that our actions were appropriate because others appear to be doing that, too.

The worst part of the situation is that we become slaves to the culture clowns who set the stage for us. This is because it is much easier to fit in, and drug ourselves into believing that is what we are supposed to do, rather than looking behind the masks, costumes, pictures, etc., and facing the truth, which is that none of them have any Meaning.

This is what Perniola meant when he explained that present-day victims of culture merely perform meaningless rituals.<sup>41</sup> This is also one of the lessons that Dorothy learned in the Wizard of Oz, that there was no “great and powerful Oz”, rather, merely a man hiding behind a curtain. Few servants to culture have the courage to look behind that curtain. Unlike the former-prisoner of Plato’s cave<sup>42</sup>, few have the strength to cut their puppet strings and pursue true Meaning, instead.

## **H. Chapter Conclusion**

Although many individuals have attempted to erase true Meaning, namely, the Idea of God and/or that of Jesus (hereinafter both Ideas shall be collectively referenced as the “Idea of God”), and despite Nietzsche’s erroneous assertion that God “remains”<sup>43</sup> dead, like an energizer bunny, or a Timex watch, that Idea keeps going, ticking, and coming back.<sup>44</sup> In fact, “There is scarcely anything which has been declared dead as

often.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, the continued and repetitive declarations provide conclusive proof that the Idea of God simply cannot die, otherwise, one declaration/death alone would have sufficed.

This chapter has, therefore, endeavored to specifically explain the Idea of God’s continued Meaning psychologically, socially and culturally, aspects which interrelate because individuals interact with others. It has also addressed the specific Meaning given to us, and especially to our suffering on earth, by Jesus, God’s only Son. Collectively, both Ideas are necessary for each of us, and for others. That dual need is, in fact, the very reason why no single individual, no matter how seemingly high and mighty could ever declare its death permanently.

In summary, that Idea provides Meaning, inspiration, elevation, happiness and humanism, peace, rest and hope, as history unfolds, like an ever blooming rose:

***Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Verses:

Lo, how a rose e’er blooming  
From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming  
As men of old have sung.  
It came a flowret bright,  
Amid the cold of winter,  
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah ‘twas foretold it,  
The Rose I have in mind,  
With Mary we behold it,  
The Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God’s love aright  
She bore to men a Savior,  
When half-spent was the night.





### **Chapter III: The Death of the Idea of God**



## A. Introduction

The primary goal of this Chapter shall be to cure the misconception, mostly of course, of non-philosophers, that Nietzsche was alone responsible for the death of the Idea of God. Instead, it will show that Descartes opened the door, quite like the opening of Pandora's box, by doing philosophy from the perspective of the egocentric ego, whereas the Ancient Greeks and Medieval philosophers had theretofore started from Ideas, especially the Idea of God.

Afterward, it will also discuss how Hegel, Schopenhauer and Feuerbach further tore the fabric of faith. Lastly, it will explain the benevolent reason why Nietzsche declared the death of the Idea of God, and show that in at least one earlier work, Nietzsche actually searched for an unknown moderate and restrained God, instead. Later on, however, he went too far and eventually sought to become a completely unrestrained God himself, for himself, alone.

## B. Descartes

Descartes' egological philosophical perspective can be best understood upon comparison with Ancient Greek and Medieval philosophical methods.

### 1. Comparison to Ancient Greek Philosophy

The Ancient Greeks sought absolute Truth, Beauty, Love, etc., from Nature.



Plato also spoke of an ultimate Idea, a Form which serves as an unchanging model which lies outside of this world, for all changeable others that lie within. Thus, they looked outside themselves with an unsuspicious eye. Rather than remaining in a lonely room, they walked outside and actively sought philosophical conversation and dialogue with others, with much more than, and outside of, their minds.<sup>46</sup>

In contrast, Descartes had no need for nature.



Suspicious not only of his eyes but of all his senses, he sought security and certainty (his hang-ups) from within his mind, instead. Rather than conversation, he sought isolation. His philosophy was, thus, methodological, scientific and solitary, remaining always inside his own mind.

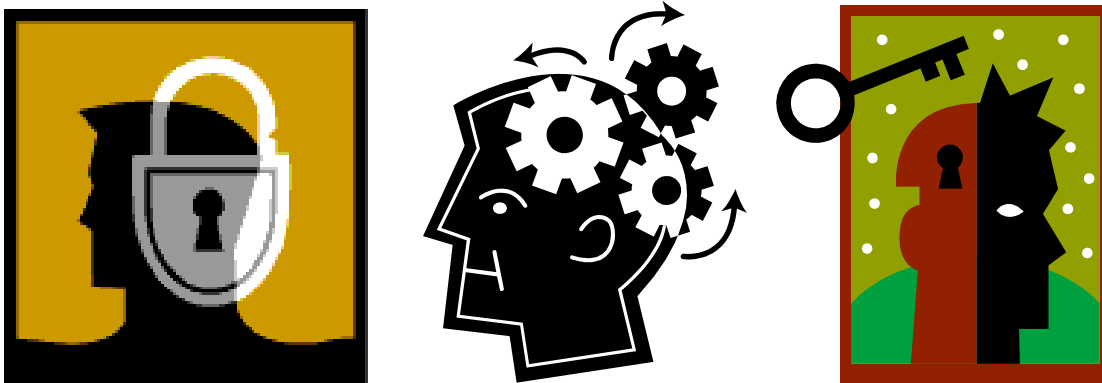
## 2. Comparison to Medieval Philosophy

In contrast, Medieval philosophy started with the Idea of God, and no other.



Basically, the Idea of God was highest and masterful, whereas philosophy was relegated to a subordinate position, and regarded merely as a rational tool that served theology. During that era, therefore, philosophy, which had strict logical rigor, was nothing more than the “handmaiden” of theology.<sup>47</sup>

In diametric opposition, Descartes radically overthrew God and all else and began anew, starting instead within the realm of his own mind.



His goal was to free reason from scholasticism because he was not blinded by authority and tradition. Rather, he believed each individual has the right to decide about God and everything else based on reason, not scripture. His task was to illuminate the darkness of the mind via isolation and introspection.

Basically, therefore, Descartes’ philosophical perspective preferred a subjective and egocentric “I” or “ego” over the “eye”<sup>48</sup> of the Ancient Greeks, and above the Medieval Idea of God. In so doing, he turned the servant into the master, indeed, for the admittedly venerable purpose of facilitating individual freedom.

### 3. Radical Return to *Idea Dei*

As most philosophers know, after Descartes radically doubted all, he suddenly returned to, and re-established the Idea of God (which is called “*Idea Dei*” in Latin),



methodically based on his aforementioned individual egotistical reason. He did so, of course, two-fold. First, he explained that his *Idea Dei* far exceeded his human frailties, so that *Idea* could not have come from him, rather, it must have been posited in his mind by something more “perfect” than he, namely, God, *per se*. He, therefore, re-established the Idea of God by a reasonable definition of perfection. Second, and in turn, he also established the existence of God by arguing that such an idea of Perfection had to include existence, otherwise, it would not be perfect. Since existence can’t be removed from perfection, he reached the rational conclusion that God must also exist.

#### **4. Misapprehension or Ignorance of Non-Philosophers**

Non-philosophers somehow miss, or completely avoid, the fact that Descartes returned to the Idea of God. That buck stops here.



They really like, and are somehow fully aware, however, of his method of radical doubt, probably because it gives them an excuse to challenge authority, run from responsibility, etc. They, however, can run but they can’t hide, for the more freedom they seem to have, the more responsible they must be, otherwise, they will face the consequences. This, of course, will be more fully explained in Chapter IV. For now,

however, suffice it to say that Descartes' radical doubt also opened the door, and paved the way to misunderstanding and excessive deconstruction.

Moreover, such misunderstanding also led to a philosophical stereotype which must also be corrected herein. Non-philosophers have come to believe that all philosophers everywhere, living or dead, indeed, even you and I, are egocentric, suspicious, unsocial introverts who not only seek solitude, but more importantly, secretively desire to undermine, undercut, belie and overthrow any and all types of pre-established authority or traditions. They also think we would not only side with, but relish watching, others that do so.

Indeed, Descartes' radical doubt caused non-philosophers to loose respect for him, for all other philosophers, and for philosophy *per se*.

##### **5. Descartes Opened the Door to the Death of Philosophy, and Much More**



Thus, above and beyond merely opening the door to the death of the Idea of God, Descartes opened the door to the loss of respect for philosophy, and to philosophy's death amidst society today! In so doing, rather than elevating philosophy's subordinate "handmaiden" status, for both philosophers and non, he murdered it, instead, and like the

opening of Pandora's box, allowed these and many more evils to plague humankind.



### C. Pascal

After Descartes, philosophy began to build its own ill-fated Tower of Babel, seeking to egologically usurp the power of the Idea of God.



Specifically, philosophers no longer endeavored to openly praise God. Put another way, it was no longer “cool.” What they believed within their minds, however, was a whole other story, of which Pascal was the perfect example.

His famous wager demonstrates the doubt as to the existence of the Idea of God that had by then permeated all of society: “If you gain, you gain all; if you loose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation that He is.”<sup>49</sup> Subsequently within that very same work, he praised God, but only to a certain restrained extent:

Know, then proud man, what a paradox you are to yourself.  
Humble yourself, weak reason; be silent, foolish nature;  
learn that man infinitely transcends man, and learn from  
your Master your true condition, of which you are ignorant.  
Hear God ...<sup>50</sup>

Within his own mind, however, his love for God had no limit, and he sought total renunciation and submission:

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... From about half past ten in the evening until about half past midnight.  
Fire.  
God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of philosophers and scholars.  
Certainty, joy, certainty, emotion, sight, joy  
God of Jesus Christ...  
Oblivious to the world and to everything except GOD....  
This is life eternal, that they might know you,  
The only true God, and him whom you sent,  
Jesus Christ  
Jesus Christ  
I have cut myself off from him for ever. I have fled from him, denied  
him, crucified him.  
Let me never be cut off from him.  
He can only be kept by the ways taught in the Gospel.  
Sweet ant total renunciation.  
Total submission to Jesus Christ and my director.  
Everlasting joy for one day's tribulation on earth.  
*I will not forget they word.* Amen.<sup>51</sup>

---

He never admitted such thoughts out in the open. Rather, we only know of them because of a note that he sewed up in his coat, to keep them close, yet avoid social ridicule:



#### D. Hegel

Unlike Pascal, some philosophers say, and I certainly agree, that Hegel hid similar sentiment intellectually rather than physically within the complexity of his work, Phenomenology of Spirit. All would agree, however, that he, perhaps more than any other philosopher to date, advocated selflessness and self-negation. Yet, in contrast to Pascal, he may very well have sparked Nietzsche's subsequent declaration of the death of the Idea of God in many ways, simply because of the way and the words he used to argue such self-negation.

##### 1. "God is Dead": 1<sup>st</sup> Mention

Hegel (not Nietzsche) was the first philosopher to ever write that "God is Dead."<sup>52</sup> He did so, however, with no selfish, egocentric, egological or homicidal intent. Rather, he merely cited the lyrics of a Lutheran hymn which laments Christ's death on the cross and expressed infinite pain therefore.



Moreover, if Nietzsche did get that concept from Hegel, he did so out of context.

## 2. Selfless Heroic Spirit

Hegel's true context was not only moral, but much more. He began that work phenomenologically by reducing Descartes' impressive ego to its proverbial knees, and ended it idealistically by advocating selfless and heroic moral action.



Specifically, Hegel successfully thwarted the certainty of the ego, namely “*ego cogito*” (Latin for “I think”), by demonstrating that thinking can never be certain, nor can it ever reach the true essence of the object-in-itself and for-itself that it is thinking of, because thinking merely compares objects to concepts socially constructed by humans amidst their temporal eras. Thus, such concepts are not only limited to the social and cultural era in which they were created, but they are also restrained by the bounds of each human's mind, all of which may be quite imperfect and mistaken.<sup>53</sup>

Afterward, Hegel went on to advocate morality idealistically. He did so by reflexively thinking not about other objects outside the mind, but about the thinking ego itself, namely, consciousness, reflexive thought which is self-consciousness.<sup>54</sup>

He realized that reflexive and phenomenological thought differ greatly. Reflexive thought is simply looking at oneself as if through a mirror. It can only see one side. Far worse, it thinks that it is certain about which it sees. That is the way Descartes thought. In comparison, Hegel's thinking was phenomenological. It not only sees oneself, as if

through a mirror, but realizes that it is doing so. More importantly, it realized that the thinker is comparing or judging that which it sees, namely, oneself, against concepts that are not certain, but rather, socially constructed within a temporal era. Such concepts could, therefore, be quite wrong. Thus, Hegel's thinking realized both sides, i.e., that which is certain, and that which is uncertain.

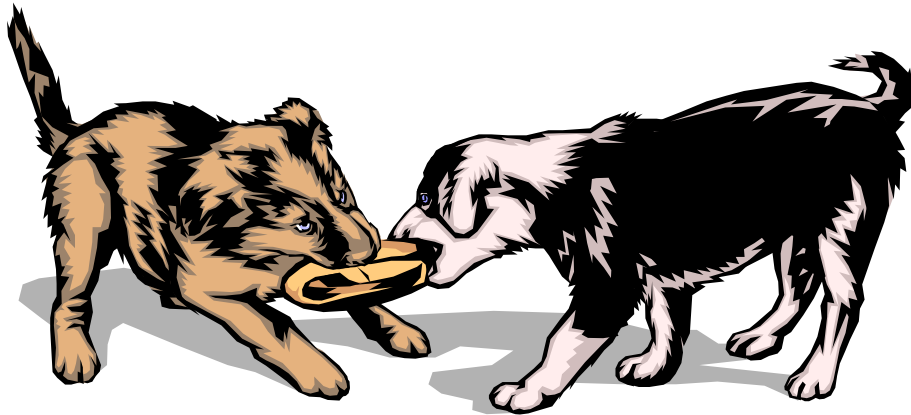
He further explained that in so doing, as one notices one's own consciousness as other (self-consciously), one finds a lord and bondage<sup>55</sup> (or master and servant) relationship, i.e., a town that is not big enough for the two of them. Thus a battle emerges, whereby one must die.



The one that must die is the “Black Stone”<sup>56</sup> which seeks to become God,<sup>57</sup> namely, our “evil” egocentricity which seeks to retreat into itself.<sup>58</sup> The one that deserves to live is selflessness, i.e., the moral one which negates itself in order to go outside itself to help others out in the community.<sup>59</sup> Basically, and perhaps surprisingly, humility prevails whereas egocentricity perishes. In fact, I’ll bet that if Descartes were alive to read about the death of his egocentric “ego” concept, he would have a coronary and perish again!

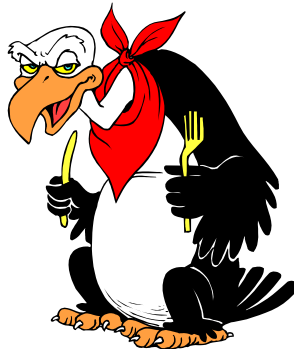
**Most importantly, I believe that Hegel’s Spirit is much more than mere morality. For humans that act morally are inspired by something greater, the Idea of God. Otherwise, in reality, when push comes to shove in this dog-eat-dog world,**

humans will give in to their egocentricity, regardless.



In fact, Heidegger’s “care” concept<sup>60</sup> is problematic for the very same reason, namely, unless we fear a God or seek His (or Her) heavenly rewards, we will often stray from the path of righteousness.

In summary, Hegel definitely did not seek to declare the death of the Idea of God. He advocated the opposite, morality, however, by using very dangerous words, which madman Nietzsche may, in fact, have preyed (not prayed) upon, like a vulture.



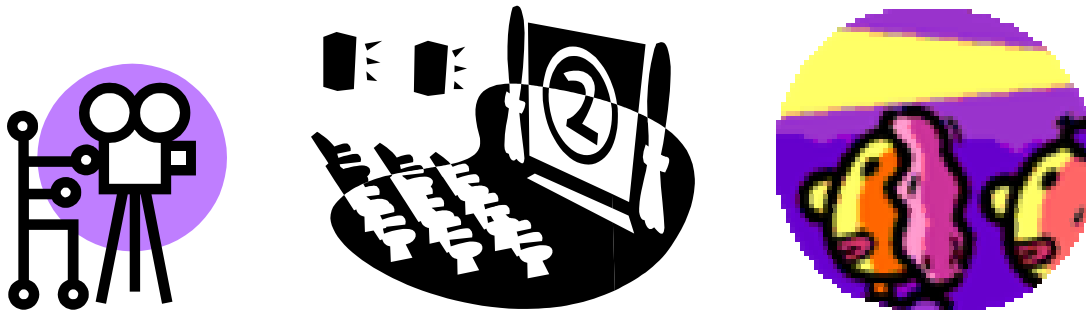
#### E. Freuerbach

Freuerbach fed and fanned the fire which was about to brew the death of the Idea of God like a witch’s stew by presenting a “projection theory”<sup>61</sup> of God. For, Marx, in fact, called him a “stream of fire,” and the “purgatory of the present time,”<sup>62</sup> while others deemed him the “scarecrow of the Christians.”<sup>63</sup>





Basically, he maintained that God is nothing but the psychological projection of man: “What man wishes to be, he makes his God.”<sup>64</sup> According to Freuerbach, man created God, not vice-versa. Moreover, God is the “ghostly Opposite” of man because He has all of the qualities that man lacks. Faith, therefore, is the alienation and inward impoverishment of man, for the poorer man is, the more he projects upon God. God, thus, becomes richer and richer.<sup>65</sup>



Freuerbach’s answer, according to Küng<sup>66</sup>, is “atheism”, namely, denying more and more to God (instead of projecting more and more), and awarding more and more to man. This, he believed, was true humanism, and the “secret” of religion.<sup>67</sup> He advocated the negation of God and the assertion of man, and the recognition that natural truths (of man) lie behind the supernatural mysteries of religion (God). Thus, instead of atheism, others have called this “naturalism”<sup>68</sup>.

In short, man should love and have faith in himself instead of God, looking

backwards (anthropologically) instead of forwards (historically), i.e., the very opposite of Hegel's idealistic Spirit.

## **F. Schopenhauer**

Compared to Feuerbach, who was obviously opposed to religion, only, Schopenhauer was practically a complete pessimist about everything else. For, in contrast to Hegel's idealism, Schopenhauer saw human existence as nothing but suffering: "what is all existence but a striving arising from want; what it is but suffering?"<sup>69</sup>



Nietzsche, on the other hand, shared Schopenhauer's disdain for optimism,<sup>70</sup> and both also advocated nihilism. They differed, however, in its execution. Schopenhauer spoke of "passive"<sup>71</sup> nihilism, and advocated an ethic of (self-) renunciation and compassion<sup>72</sup> (for others), whereas Nietzsche rejected compassion,<sup>73</sup> and advocated active nihilism, namely, the "affirmation of human life."<sup>74</sup>

## **G. Nietzsche**

Nietzsche's active nihilism began benignly in The Birth of Tragedy, wherein he searched for an unknown God, but eventually went too far, especially in The Will to Power and The Antichrist, by seeking to become a God himself. The latter, of course, basically occurred because of his own psychological and mental demise.

## 1. Sample of Early Works: The Search for an Unknown, Moderate God

Nietzsche wrote The Birth of Tragedy<sup>75</sup> when he was much younger, and more importantly, before his mental illness took its toll. Thus, unlike his later works, it is quite “playful.”<sup>76</sup> Moreover, it treats thinking as enjoyable “flying and soaring,”<sup>77</sup> and appreciates music: life without music is a “mistake.”<sup>78</sup> Most importantly, it advocates moderation by searching for an unknown God that is a cross between, and bears the qualities of, two different Greek gods, Apollo (god of the sun, images, lyrics, inspiration, etc.), and Dionysus (god of wine, melody, orgiastic power, etc.).<sup>79</sup>

### a. The Rebirth of Tragedy

More specifically, Nietzsche advocated not a birth, but a rebirth of tragedy from and out of “the fire magic of music”<sup>80</sup> whereby the individual is both constructed and deconstructed.<sup>81</sup> Thus, The Birth of Tragedy certainly equates to the theme of this dissertation, because it mentions the joyful benefits of self-negation: “it is only through the spirit of music that we can experience the joy of the annihilation of the individual.”<sup>82</sup>

Thus, as this work is quite befitting thereof, a critical summary shall first be cited, and a specific discussion of major points shall follow.

### b. Critical Summary

The entire work has been critically summarized as follows:

What concerned Nietzsche at first was whether in light of the encircling nihilism it was inevitable that men become pessimistic about life and therefore renounce it, as Schopenhauer did, or whether there was some reason nevertheless or affirming life, as one of Nietzsche’s idols, Goethe, had done in his career. Nietzsche found in Homer’s account of Apollo and Dionysus that the birth of tragedy, that is, the emergence of art and the fullest development of the aesthetic element in humanity, is the result of a fusion between the two principles of these two gods respectively represent and embody. Dionysus was for

Nietzsche the symbol of the dynamic stream of life, which knows no restraints or barriers and defies all limitations. In the worship of Dionysus, the individual would lapse into a drunken frenzy and thereby lose his own identity in the larger ocean of life. Apollo, on the other hand, was the symbol of order, restraint, and form, the power to create beauty through art. If the Dionysian mood was best expressed in the feeling of abandonment in some types of music, the Apollonian form-giving force found its highest expression, according to Nietzsche, in Greek sculpture. Thus Dionysus symbolized humanity's unity with life where individuality is absorbed in the larger reality of the life force, whereas Apollo was the symbol of the "principle of individuation," that power that controls and restrains the dynamic process of life in order to create a formed work of art or a controlled personal character. From another point of view, the Dionysian represents the negative and destructive dark powers of the soul, which culminate, when unchecked, in "that disgusting mixture of voluptuousness and cruelty" typical of "the most savage beasts of nature." Again, the Apollonian represents the power to deal with the powerful surge of vital energy, to harness destructive powers, and to transmute these into a creative act.

Greek tragedy, according to Nietzsche, is a great work of art. It represents the conquest of Dionysus by Apollo. But from this account Nietzsche drew the conclusion that people are not faced with a choice between the Dionysian and the Apollonian. To assume even that one has such a choice to make is to misunderstand the true nature of the human condition. The fact is that human life inevitably includes the dark and surging forces of passion. What Greek tragedy illustrates, according to Nietzsche, is that instead of abandoning oneself to the flood of impulse, instinct, and passion, the awareness of these driving forces becomes the occasion for producing a work of art, whether in one's own character through moderation or in literature or the plastic arts through the imposition of form upon a resisting material. Nietzsche saw the birth of tragedy or the creation of art as a response of the basically healthy element in a person, the Apollonian, to the challenge of the diseased frenzy of the Dionysian. In this view, art could not occur without the stimulus of the Dionysian; at the same time, if the Dionysian were considered either the only element in human nature or the dominant element, one might very well despair and come finally to a negative attitude toward life. But for Nietzsche, the supreme

achievement of human nature occurred in Greek culture where the Dionysian and Apollonian elements were brought together. To deny, as 19<sup>th</sup>-century culture seemed to do, that the Dionysian element had a rightful place in life was to postpone, as Nietzsche saw, to some later date the inevitable explosion of vital forces, which cannot be permanently denied expression. To ask whether life should dominate knowledge or knowledge dominate life is to provoke the question which of these two is the higher and more decisive power. There is no doubt, said Nietzsche, that life is the higher and dominating power, but raw vital power is finally life-defeating. For this reason, Nietzsche looked to the Greek formula, the fusion of the Dionysian and Apollonian elements, by which human life is transformed into an aesthetic phenomenon. Such a formula, thought Nietzsche, could provide modern culture with a relevant and workable standard of behavior[.]<sup>83</sup>

Crystal clear from that summary is the standard or method of moderation that Nietzsche advocated at that early point in time.

### **c. Specific Points**

#### **1) Art as Metaphysical Activity**

One of the first things that The Birth of Tragedy does is denounce morality. According to Nietzsche, art, not morality is the metaphysical activity of man, because morality is nothing but appearance, phenomena, deception, etc.<sup>84</sup> Art is not a pleasant frolic and detour, or a cozy sideline, rather, it is the highest task and the truest metaphysical activity of this life.<sup>85</sup>

Nietzsche further explains that Apollonian culture is naïve art that is rarely attained.<sup>86</sup> So, a human artist must instead mediate between that deity and Dionysus.<sup>87</sup> This is because Apollo would relegate us into a “world of suffering”<sup>88</sup>, because optimism is nothing but a delusion of limitless power, which speaks of the dignity of man,<sup>89</sup> but “gradually drifts toward a dreadful destruction.”<sup>90</sup> Apollo really requires slaves instead, spreading nothing but illusion.<sup>91</sup> Apollo aims to “deliver us from”<sup>92</sup> Dionysian things,

but ends up doing the reverse.

Moreover, Nietzsche initially seems to reject some of the main themes of this dissertation regarding heroes, inspiration, etc., early on in The Birth of Tragedy. For example, he indicates that Apollonians never tire of characterizing the struggle with the hero with fate, depicting “the triumph of moral world order”<sup>93</sup> to inspire us. He also contends that all heroes are mere masks of Dionysus, the original hero.<sup>94</sup> By the end of The Birth of Tragedy, however, he has quite a different perspective.

Drawing perhaps on Plato’s cave metaphor<sup>95</sup>, Nietzsche further objects to Apollonian art as nothing but hollow images projected on a dark wall of appearance.<sup>96</sup> If we rest in the “calm sea of Apollonian contemplation”<sup>97</sup>, we can become an inactive “crowd of spectators.”<sup>98</sup> He explains that unchecked by myth, art is greedy and lawless.<sup>99</sup> Basically, total optimism eviscerates the primordial, and in so doing, drives the human spirit, namely, the music, out.<sup>100</sup>

## 2) Music = Nietzsche’s Early Answer

Music is, in fact, Nietzsche’s answer in The Birth of Tragedy. He praises music endlessly throughout the whole book, reveling in the “power of music”,<sup>101</sup> which language simply cannot convey, indicating that language “can never by any means disclose the innermost heart of music”<sup>102</sup>.

Unlike the other arts, music is not a copy of the phenomenon, not the empty universality of abstraction.<sup>103</sup> Rather, it is a universal language, which at the very same time is also abstracted from particulars.<sup>104</sup> More specifically, it is the immediate language of the will, which for a brief moment, allows us to be primordial being itself.<sup>105</sup> Nothing similar can be done by the mind,<sup>106</sup> rather, such a new soul must not be spoken, but sung.<sup>107</sup>

At first, he explains that he does not mean Socrates' music, which he considers degenerate, counterfeit, wretched and poor.<sup>108</sup> However, he admits that Socrates' influence "has spread over all posterity like a shadow that keeps growing in the evening sun," and that Socrates and the other Greeks, like charioteers, still hold the reigns of other cultures.<sup>109</sup> According to Nietzsche, this occurred because by dying, Socrates made a name for himself, like a martyr, both for himself, and for the sake of philosophy: "the dying Socrates became the new ideal."<sup>110</sup> So, by the end of The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche looked harder and deeper, and realized that by facing death, Socrates had practiced Dionysian music, too, albeit of somewhat different type than that which Nietzsche propounded at that time.<sup>111</sup> Instead, Nietzsche advocated the type of music whereby one faces Dionysian death by **remaining** alive and blending it proportionally with Apollonian optimism. Thus, Nietzsche's music in The Birth of Tragedy turns out to be another medium of moderation.

### 3) **Bottom Line = (Musical) Moderation**

The very end of Nietzsche's early work hits his main theme of moderation home by explaining that the two artistic drives (Apollonian and Dionysian) "must unfold their powers in strict proportion according to the law of eternal justice,"<sup>112</sup> and by saying that we must give sacrifice to the "temple of both deities."<sup>113</sup> This requires a duality, a dialectic: "For now the virtuous hero must be a dialectician."<sup>114</sup> Heroes, he said, must have a dual nature, that of a cruel, barbarian demon, and that of a mild, gentle ruler.<sup>115</sup> Thus, by the end of The Birth of Tragedy, he **praises** heroes that practice such moderation, instead.

Such moderation can only be accomplished, however, when "we demand first of all the conquest of the subjective, redemption from the 'ego', and the silencing of the

individual will and desire.”<sup>116</sup> He also implies that, in comparison to moderation, which will result in reward, one-sided egocentric orientation will enslave humankind, whereby it will destroy itself from its own hand.<sup>117</sup>

#### **d. Recap and Segue**

From the foregoing discussion of specific points, it is clear that Nietzsche’s early work, The Birth of Tragedy, closely conforms to those of this dissertation in many ways. His later works, however, are quite another story.

### **2. Sample of Later Works: Extreme Selfish Desire to Become God *per se***

By the time Nietzsche wrote his infamous later works, The Will to Power, The Antichrist, etc., however, his mental infirmity had firmly set in. Consequently, therein he advocates nothing but extreme Dionysian power, orgiastic and otherwise, with no moderation, whatsoever. By then, rather than virtuously restraining power with reason, he simply sought to become such a God himself.

As a prime example of his later perspective which, indeed, “shocks the conscience”<sup>118</sup>, consider the following “law” promulgated by Nietzsche, and compare it with the note that Pascal hid in his coat (*see* section C above):

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#### **Law Against Christianity**

Proclaimed on the Day of Salvation, First Day of Year One  
(30 September 1888 in the phony calendar)

War to the Death Against Vice: The Vice Being Christianity

*First Clause.*—Depraved is every type of Anti-Nature. The Most Depraved type of Man is the Priest: He *teaches* Anti-Nature. Against the Priest one does not have arguments, one has Prison.

*Second Clause.*—Every Participation in a Religious Service is an Assassination Attempt against Public Morality. One shall be more severe against Protestants than Catholics and



more severe against Liberal Protestants than the Strict Believers. The Criminality of Being-a-Christian increases as one approaches Science. The Criminal of the Criminals is consequently the *Philosopher*.

*Third Clause.*—The Accursed Places where Christianity has incubated its Basisk Eggs shall be Leveled to the Ground and must be regarded as *Despicable* Places of the Earth and to the Horror of All Posterity. Poisonous Snakes shall be bred there.

*Fourth Clause.*—The Preaching of Chastity is a Public Inticement to Anti-Nature. Every Contempt of Sexual Life, and every Pollution of It by the Concept ‘Unclean,’ is Original Sin against the Holy Spirit of Life.

*Fifth Clause.*—Eating at the Same Table as a Priest is Forbidden: Doing so excommunicates oneself from Decent Society. The Priest is *Our* Chandala—He shall be Outlawed, Starved, Driven into every kind of Wasteland.

*Sixth Clause.*—The “Holy” Story shall be Called by the Name it has Earned, as *Damned* Story; the words “God,” “Savior,” “Redeemer,” “Saint” shall be used as Terms of Abuse and as Criminal Insignia.

*Seventh Clause.*—The Rest follows therefrom.

[signed] *The Antichrist*<sup>119</sup>

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Witnesseth, therefore, how very different his early and later works really are.

### 3. Critique of European and Elite Christianity

As Dr. Hotep, one of the readers of this dissertation<sup>120</sup>, poignantly commented, Nietzsche’s goal might have been to criticize European Christians’ repeated abuse of their religion as a false pretense under which they perpetrated various atrocities, including the genocide of the Native American people during the colonization of America. According to Dr. Hotep, Nietzsche may have sensed that they were merely paying hypocritical lip service to such principles, and Nietzsche may have noticed that “the ruling Christian elite controls this world & its resources & live in splendor while millions of God’s children live in soul crushing poverty.”

I entirely agree, for I have personally witnessed many hypocritical actions

perpetrated under the guise of Christianity. For example, I have witnessed old ladies going to church not for any right reason, but rather, only to be seen praying with rosary beads, etc., to give the false appearance of pious faith. They then furtively employ such a false appearance in order to reap pecuniary profit from selling items or services to parishioners, etc. An in-depth explanation of such hypocrisy, however, certainly exceeds the scope of this dissertation. Thus, instead of hypocritically attempting such herein, the undersigned shall respectfully leave it for those who would be better-suited.

Returning to the theme hereof, Nietzsche's goals were not the problem, but rather, the method, manner, or way in which he went about them. Instead of successfully executing his goals, his "artistic" or "criminal" manner was, indeed, counterproductive.

#### 4. Artist and Criminal?



Rather than relegating Nietzsche's later works to the rantings of an insane person, i.e., the result of his severely deteriorated mental, and physical condition, many people paint him as an "artist."<sup>121</sup> In so doing, I believe they, too, have gone too far.

Personally, I think Nietzsche was quite creative in calling himself a criminal especially because he simply was not! Legally, a crime two prerequisites: 1) an "*actus reus*," Latin for a criminal "act"; and 2) "*mens rea*," Latin for a criminal "intent."<sup>122</sup> Nietzsche, however, did not do, or have, either, respectively. For, he never undertook

nihilism actively, rather, he hypocritically remained in the passive realm of thought. Moreover, an insanity defense would have easily quashed the latter element, and afforded an acquittal. Indeed, although insanity defenses are usually very hard to prove, his case would have been a proverbial “slam-dunk.”

Moreover, in so declaring, he never became a law unto himself. For, one individual cannot declare law for him or herself, alone. Rather, as Aquinas explained, law must be promulgated for the common good of others, not by just any person, but by someone who has been entrusted with the care of an entire community.<sup>123</sup>

Nietzsche was right, however, in one respect, he declared the death of the Idea of God (“God is Dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.”),<sup>124</sup> and got away with it, leaving us to suffer the consequences. He attempted to mitigate such consequences by indicating that they, too, would be overcome.<sup>125</sup> But, he did not foresee the latent potential and lethal possibilities of the type of evil that he unleashed for others. Basically, he did the “crime” but did not do the “time” (the slang expression for serving a prison sentence). Rather, he escaped via his own death, whereas we must live on and bear the undue burden of all consequential damages.

## 5. Benevolent Humanist: Freedom from Mental Slavery



Nietzsche did intend, however, to do good for others to the extent that he declared the death of the Idea of God for the sake of their freedom. For, admittedly, the Idea of God can, and has, been used to sublate others. Marx, perhaps, said it best when he stated, “religion is the opiate of the people,”<sup>126</sup> revealing that priests and rulers used and abused it to drown humanity, to blunt other peoples’ desire for a decent human existence.<sup>127</sup> The opposite, however, is also true, namely, the people can use it to drug themselves with promises of the hereafter, to adorn their chains with flowers instead of breaking them.<sup>128</sup> To that extent, Nietzsche was, in fact, a benevolent hero for others.

## 6. Titanic Inherent Evil



He, however, never saw the titanic iceberg that lied beneath. For, while he was busy “artistically” and “criminally” declaring the death of the Idea of God, another philosophical tradition, deconstruction, which once again began benignly with Kant, theretofore took the reins of his destruction, and eventually used it, quite like Hitler, to rape, rampage, detonate and annihilate absolutely every type of authority and tradition. For, indeed, the similar sake of freedom, it, instead, devalues and devours humanism (*see* herein Chapter II, section F), leaving only death in its tracks.

In so doing, it has overpowered, and made a laughing stock of Nietzsche, who merely declared the death of one tradition, only. If Nietzsche only knew, he would turn

in his grave!!!

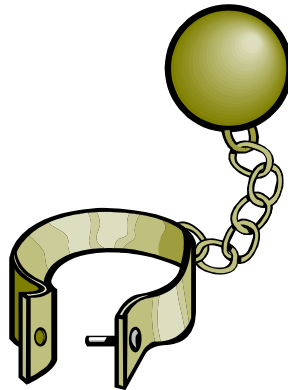


Thus, let us now turn to discuss deconstruction. It began well, but later blended with Nietzsche's nihilistic declaration of the death of the Idea of God. Thus, it has evolved into extreme destruction, a pervasive evil, which I shall pejoratively denounce, deplore, and resoundingly relegate to the nomenclature of "tyrannical deconstructive freedom."



**Chapter IV:**

**Pervasive Evil Consequence:  
Tyrannical Deconstructive Freedom**



## A. Introduction

In modern society today, philosophy is practically dead.



Perhaps, therefore, I, like Nietzsche, shall be the first to proclaim it! Before you disagree, however, adjudicate whether it really only flourishes in academic circles, if, indeed, at all, amidst learned scholarly circles. Is it not a cult that shies away from society where it simply does not fit in, to create its own little world, for-itself, where it would? Further still, consider if such scholars have any respect left for it, for it has, in fact, primarily due to the work of Derrida, become nothing but trivial games of grammar and linguistics.

Fear not, however, for we will soon resurrect the Idea of God and regain respect for philosophy herein. First, though, we must seek out this incredible deconstructive evil, draw it near, learn all of its tricks, battle its seemingly powerful beauty of freedom, and prevail in a heroic heap of hope and roses ever blooming.

Every rose, indeed, has its thorn. That of the Idea of God is deconstruction, a seemingly benevolent philosophical tradition which basically began innocuously with Kant, continued with Hegel and reached its hey-day with Derrida, its most zealous advocate today.

We shall, thus, take each in turn.

## B. Kant

Kant was the first to bifurcate noumena (things in themselves), and phenomena (the mere hollow appearance thereof). In so doing, however, he did not create a big stir. Its division simply was not as radical as Descartes' doubt, or as snazzy as Nietzsche's legendary emancipation proclamation. Indeed, Nietzsche himself egotistically predicted that the future would divide the past into "before Nietzsche" and "after Nietzsche."<sup>129</sup> In stark contrast, Kant was quite humble and moral, categorically and imperatively<sup>130</sup> so, in fact. Thus, unsurprisingly, and comparatively, his renowned concept of the "Sublime"<sup>131</sup> was restrained by reason. Regardless, however, it bore the seeds of sinister deconstruction.

Kant was, however, the first to reflect upon consciousness reflexively. He, thus, separated noumena from phenomena, not for metaphysical reasons, but to critique reason, namely, consciousness itself. The ability to do so, is, in fact, that which distinguishes humans (at least as far as we know) from all other animals.

Although the end purpose of his critique was restraint, his Sublime concept begins with "*freie Spiel*," the German terminology for the "free play" of the imagination.<sup>132</sup> He wanted philosophy to breathe free as it first begins to judge itself. Specifically, its first moment is disinterest, which refrains from reacting to objects. It is not a public pleasure that can be taken away, yet it isn't a private pleasure either, but rather, a pure pleasure in the universal (i.e., universal concepts). Such a judge is completely free from biased inclinations or personal interests. The understanding and the imagination play freely; neither is the master or the servant of the other. This is not mere "*urteil*," judging, but "*Beurteilungsvermögen*," the art of judging. Thus, everything is judged from a "universal concept" of beauty, which according to Kant, is the same for all persons.



At first, Kant seems to stray from morality: “Where the moral law speaks, we are no longer free.”<sup>133</sup> A purposiveness without purpose, however, lies in the play. He also calls such art “taste,” i.e., the ability to see the unseeable, the art “which produces freedom.” Taste is, moreover, not the life of the Spirit, but “*Lebensgefühl*,” the feeling of life in the subject.

Eventually, however, the imagination’s free play, which can also be called “aesthetics,” turns out to be ethical, for Kant deems it “the very condition for the possibility of a new ethics or morality play.” He also demanded action thereupon. In so doing, according to Derrida, Kant imposed a frame of purity, transcendentalism, universality, etc., on taste, a limit on the free play. Kant himself admitted that free play is re-enframed and determined again by “the purposiveness of [its own] form.”<sup>134</sup>

### C. Hegel

As mentioned prior herein (*see* Chapter III, section D), Hegel’s Spirit was similarly restrained by morality. It can, in fact, be argued that it was nothing but morality. Regardless, however, it augmented the growth of the seeds of deconstruction, because unlike Kant, Hegel basically took over where Kant left off, and further explained that because our concepts are not universals, but mediated and tied to the era which constructed them socially and culturally, the essence of noumena by-itself and for-itself, can never be known by us. That made a laughing stock out of Descartes’ seemingly powerful ego concept, which theretofore appeared to be able to go out of itself into the world and grasp objects with absolute certainty. Moreover, it also shattered the social and cultural fabric of our nomos, the belief system that individuals tap into, to raise themselves out of a state of anomy, a “Lucifer state psychological,” of terror and chaos (*see* herein Chapter II, sub-section C2). Thus, it may very well have “inspired” Derrida

to exacerbate the evil of deconstruction by removing all restraint.

#### **D. Derrida**

Derrida's concept of "deconstruction" (which he was the first to coin), was not, however, necessarily egotistical (evil). For, like many others aforementioned herein, he benevolently sought to attain even more freedom for humankind, i.e., for others. Like Hegel, however, he used strong words which have been abused, and like Nietzsche, he did not foresee its opposite effect, namely, more slavery. In his most recent works, The Gift of Death, and Politics of Friendship, Derrida has himself returned to the Idea of God. However, at this point in time, it is too late for him to pick up the milk that he has long spilt for others. Even if he were to try more adamantly to do so in the future, others would probably not heed him, for he would seem a hypocrite.

In general, deconstruction is heterography, i.e., open. It includes the idea of loosing all consciousness or memory of itself in order to find itself again. To that extent, it is somewhat similar to Hegel's Spirit. It differs, however, because it is not about hearing and understanding oneself, but rather, more of a sovereign silence without identity, self or nearness to self. It is negativity without negation, i.e., Spirit without ethics.<sup>135</sup>

It has no subject or goal, like a vagrant. Nor does it have unity or connection, which is disruptive and annoying. Above and beyond phenomenology, it moves away from presence to see what is not there. Yet, to some extent it is also dialectical because it sees both what is, and what is not, there. Moreover, its sovereign freedom is silence, the paradoxical unsayable within the sayable that one is seduced by. It is also spontaneous, for its goal is to liberate and protect grammatology from the perverse, impure and

stagnant rules of linguistics. Thus, Derrida constructed a concept of “différance” to liberate writing from the metaphysics of presence.



Moreover, Derrida believes that deconstruction is necessary, especially for metaphysics. According to him, metaphysics needs it to get a chance to live, to tap into its (Heideggerean) possibilities, to revive itself. In fact, he claims that grammatology isn't negative deconstruction at all, but rather, a playful game of interventive “reconstruction.”<sup>136</sup>

To so convey, Derrida used very strong words. For example, he critiqued Kant as follows:

Now what does the Critique of Pure Reason tell us? That examples are the wheelchairs [roulettes] of judgment ... a Russian roulette if one puts into play pleasure without enjoyment, the death drive and the mourning labor in the experience of the beautiful.<sup>137</sup>

Furthermore, in his most famous work, Of Grammatology, he calls writing “dead letter,” the “carrier of death.” He also cites Saussure, who deemed writing a dangerous sin, a mask, a disguise, an idolatry of letters that must be “exorcised.” Therein, Derrida also considers writing to be a “hopeless joke” that leads to “despair” and “outer darkness.”<sup>138</sup>

Existentially, writing's underlying problem is phenomenological, namely, signifiers (phenomenological words), cannot refer to a transcendental signified noumena

(eternal, timeless Presence). Instead, the signified conceals and erases itself. Meaning is always deferred and Presence is never actually present. Consequently, signifiers attain significance only in their differences from one another, namely, in what they define themselves against. Thus, his concept of “différance” reminds us of such deferred meaning, and also calls similar attention to the limitations of the spoken word.<sup>139</sup>

God, therefore, is Presence. Instead of différance, He is Indifference. More importantly, Derrida mentions God many times, both directly and indirectly. For example, he implies God when he refers to the book of nature which is open to all of us thusly, “I learn to serve and adore its author.” He also refers to the hand of God indirectly as follows:

The future is not a future present, yesterday is not a past present. That which is beyond the closure of the book is neither to be awaited or refund. It is there, but out there—beyond—within repetition but eluding us there. It is there like the shadow of the book, the third between two hands holding the book, the difference in the now of writing. The movement between the book and the book, this other hand...<sup>140</sup>

He also refers to God directly with his concept of “neume,” which is pure vocalization, inarticulate, song without speech, breath, inspired by God, and addressed to God. It is a moment we wish could last forever. Without intervals or différance, he writes, our hearts are at “peace.”<sup>141</sup>

#### **F. Extreme Freedom = Tyranny**

The inherent problem of deconstruction, however, is that people, both philosophers and non, quickly forget, or perhaps ignore, any aspect thereof, especially the Idea of God and reconstruction, that concerns restraint. After all, différance is a concept of free choice, and let’s face it, the idea that “reading does not have to behave,”<sup>142</sup> is a lot

more fun than moral moderation. More importantly, and far worse, it has escaped its cage, and has been used to support the idea that nothing else needs to behave, either, and to undermine all sorts of authority and traditions, including not only law and order, but philosophy *per se*. Basically, its purpose is destabilization,<sup>143</sup> and its result is anarchy.

Anarchy results from too much freedom. For, as Plato explained, the Ideal State is ruled by an aristocracy of philosopher-kings.<sup>144</sup> They would adjudicate virtuously, in my opinion, exhibiting the four cardinal virtues, justice, prudence, fortitude and temperance, as well as the three theological virtues, faith hope and charity. They would also avoid the vices that we have come to call the “seven deadly sins,” namely, pride, covetousness (greed), lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth.<sup>145</sup> **Basically, they would do so by employing Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean, whereby one restrains excessive vices with reason, opting for virtuous moderation, instead,<sup>146</sup> which is, of course, similar to Plato’s chariot metaphor, pursuant to which reason reins-in two wild horses, spirit and desire.**<sup>147</sup> Most importantly, however, they would treat the common good as superior to themselves.

The next best state, as per Plato, is timocracy, wherein rulers, instead, love their own honor more than the common good.<sup>148</sup> Declining still, next comes the state of oligarchy, wherein the desire for wealth reigns supreme. Afterward, democracy (which Plato was quite critical of) allows further degeneration because it allows all people to rule equally, including those who indulge in excessive appetites, instead of only those best fit to do so. The worst state, tyranny, results from such continuous appetite indulgence.

Tyranny is a state of utmost freedom. It is when one allows one’s passions to master one’s soul. One, thus, becomes subservient to such passions, perhaps without even realizing it. In so doing, the subservient soul becomes the slave of master passions.

Tyranny's inward result, therefore, is personal, mental and psychological slavery. Its outward result is also slavery, namely, under a tyrannical despot (can you say Hitler?) who comes on the scene and seduces the poor into seemingly plundering the rich. Basically, the people's weakened psychological state calls for a strong champion to lead them, but such a "leader" takes advantage, and enslaves them, instead.<sup>149</sup> Thus, in short, tyranny is all-around "slavery must complete and most cruel."<sup>150</sup>

For, that is what political theorist Rousseau meant when he said, "man is free, but everywhere he is in chains."<sup>151</sup>



It is also the import of the following statement: "people have no roots, which hampers them a great deal."<sup>152</sup> Even philosophers have noted that today, although philosophy is free to move back and forth, and is even critical of itself, it is not in the service of anything, and it might, in fact, be too free.<sup>153</sup> It is why Sartre said man is 'condemned' to freedom.<sup>154</sup> It is also the underlying premise of the following joke: "God is dead, but man isn't doing so well himself."<sup>155</sup>

The meaning of human life, however, is no laughing matter. Deconstruction has devalued humanism (*see* herein Chapter II, section F). Everything is transitory.<sup>156</sup> Human being is "*Zwischen*," German for "intermediary space," i.e., in between, which appears to be erotic, stimulating and intoxicating,<sup>157</sup> but results in the opposite.

Specifically, society's behavior today does not behave. It is no longer guided by

custom or individual conscience. Ethics and morals are powerless. Personal morality fails.<sup>158</sup> No one has the integrity to bear witness to anything.<sup>159</sup> There are no life projects. No one seeks to find the stairway to heaven. Instead of fulfilling goals, people quit swiftly and with unbridled alacrity. People seek fast-paced image gratification<sup>160</sup> rather than rest.<sup>161</sup> Artistic images no longer inspire us, rather, they have lost their halo.<sup>162</sup> Instead of facing things, people try to escape.

The following song exemplifies both the desire to fly, and unjustifiable egocentrism, for the singer believes “statutes crumble **for me**”:

**Fly**  
(Artist: Sugar Ray)

Verses:

All around the world statutes crumble for me  
Who knows how long I've loved you  
Everywhere I go people stop and they see  
Twenty-five years old my mother God rest her soul

Dance a little stranger, show me where you've been  
Love can make you hostage wanna do it again  
There's no time to think about the starting or the end  
We'll find out I'm told, my mother she told me so

All around the world, statutes crumble for me  
Who knows how long I've loved you  
Everyone I know has been so good to me  
Twenty-five years old my mother God rest her soul

Refrain:

**I just wanna fly**  
**Put your arms around me, baby**  
**I just wanna fly**  
**Put your arms around me, baby**  
**I just want to fly**

Moreover, instead of believing in anything, people simply try to transcend by running away from everything as the following song demonstrates quite well:

***Run Lola Run***  
(Artist: Franka Potente)

Verses:

I don't believe in trouble  
I don't believe in pain  
I don't believe there's nothing left  
but running here again

I don't believe in promise  
I don't believe in chance  
I don't believe you can resist  
the things that make no sense

I don't believe in silence  
'coz silence seems so slow  
I don't believe in energy  
the tension is too low

I don't believe in panic  
I don't believe in fear  
I don't believe in prophecies  
so don't waste any tears

I don't believe reality would be  
the way it should  
But I believe in fantasy  
the future's understood

I don't believe in history  
I don't believe in truth  
I don't believe that's destiny  
or someone to accuse

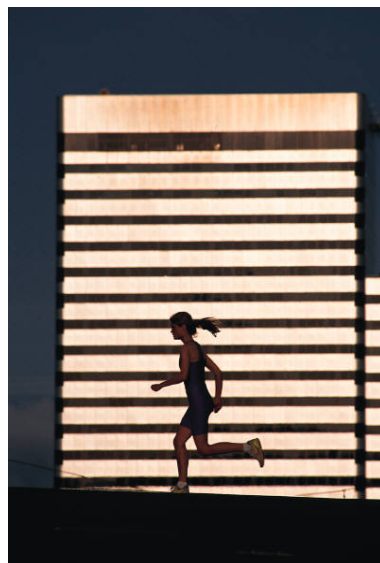
I want you to try, try  
to needing to know why, why  
No kidding, no sin, sin  
No running, no win, win

No angels, no girls, girls  
No memories, no Gods, Gods  
No rockets, no heat, heat  
No chocolate, no sweet, sweet

No feeling, no secrets...  
The silence you feel...  
which hides you from the real...  
I want you to try, try  
Needing to know why

Refrain:

**I Believe, I believe!!!**





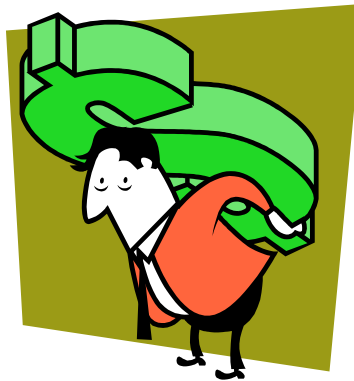
### G. No Easy Escape

Guess what -- you can run, but you can't hide!



You can declare the death of the Idea of God, but it will infinitely come back over and over again.<sup>163</sup> But, before we can discuss the answer or antidote to both the death of the Idea of God and to its pervasive evil consequence, tyrannical deconstructive freedom, we must first address a more specific, cunning and parasitic evil consequence which arose out of both that death and such deconstruction, a concept which I have coined: “debt-capitalism.”

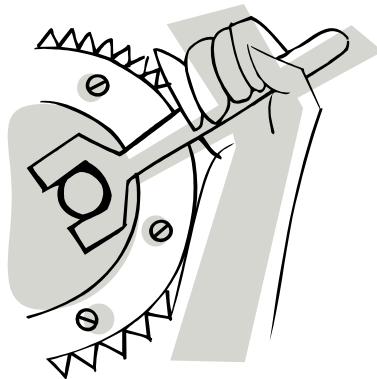
**Chapter V:**  
**Parasitic Evil Consequence:**  
**Debt-Capitalism**



## A. Introduction

Debt-capitalism is a term that I shall use to describe America's current sinister, cunning, and parasitic economic system. It causes far greater alienation than Marx ever recognized from the type of capitalism that initially transpired during the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, it occurs collaterally behind the scenes, and thus belies, America's present and more benevolent system of "regulated welfare capitalism", as per John Rawls. Accordingly, the best way to define debt-capitalism is to begin by comparing and contrasting it with Marx's concept of alienated labor, and Rawls' concept of regulated welfare capitalism.

### 1. Marx's Concept of Alienated Labor



As Marx described in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, alienated labor arose during the Industrial Revolution from an economic system which permitted people to own "private property."<sup>164</sup> Such a system bifurcated humankind into two classes which constantly and dialectically struggle with one another, namely, rich capitalists who owned private property, and poor workers that didn't. The politics of such a system, therefore, were based on greed.

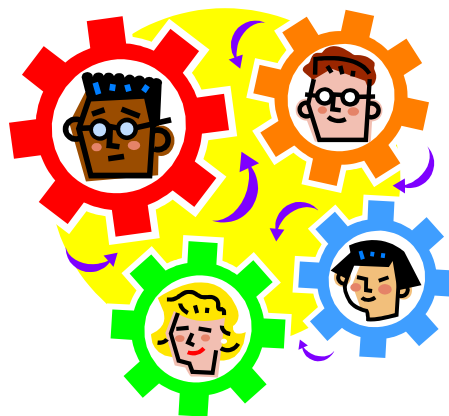
Specifically, the consequences of alienated labor were four-fold. First, the worker was alienated from the **product** which he or she produced, and thus deserved. Instead of,

for example, a farmer who grew his own food, reaped the harvest, and ate it himself, the worker had to forfeit the product, and received meager wages instead, which never equaled the product's true worth. By accepting such wages, the worker diminished himself or herself, like self-sacrifice or penance.

Second, the worker was alienated from his or her **self** because the work was done for someone else. Accordingly, the worker worked involuntarily amidst self-denial. Moreover, the situation turned the worker into a slave or an animal because the low wages could only pay for basic and immediate animal needs like food and shelter.



Third, the worker was also alienated from his or her **species-being** because he or she was not free to be spontaneous or creative. Rather, the worker had to work monotonously (especially in assembly lines), like a machine. Obviously, humankind was not meant to be so restricted.



Fourth and lastly, workers were also alienated from **other men (and women)** because they were seen merely as workers, and not as full members of society. Moreover, a master/slave relationship was imposed on them under which they were dominated and enslaved by the capitalists. While at work, which was most of the day, they were not able to leave their work stations, and were thus also alienated from other workers and their families.<sup>165</sup>



Above and beyond the four facets of alienated labor, in his German Ideology: Part I,<sup>166</sup> Marx also noted that the materialism of capitalism also has an ideological side, through which “the ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.”<sup>167</sup>

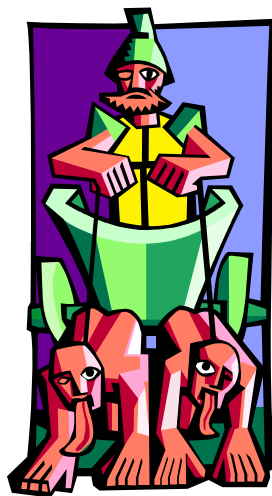


Therein, he explained that the ideas of each period grow out of and reflect the actual material conditions of the period. Each human’s consciousness does not determine his or her being, rather, his or her social being determines his or her consciousness. Since the

ruling class both directly and secretively sets the ruling ideas of each era, its ideology determines the consciousness of each individual.<sup>168</sup>

In short, therefore, the alienated worker was enslaved by the ruling class in almost all respects, including but not limited to, the following: economically, politically, physically, psychologically, socially, and even mentally/ideologically.

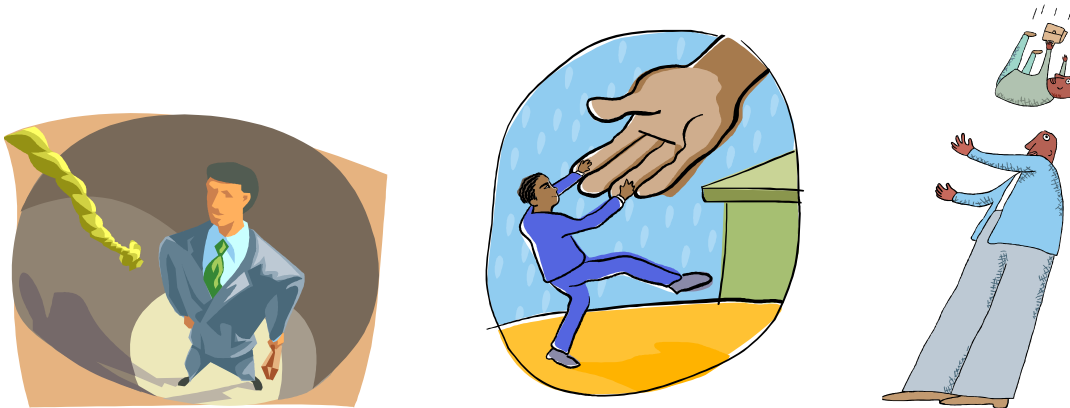
Today, this remains a specific yet multifarious evil caused by the ruling class, which in truth, is a veiled body of “Culture Clowns” (*see* Chapter 1, section G hereof) or puppeteers which create such gigantic meaningless pictures (*see* Chapter VI, subsection G2). Unless we have the courage to cut those strings, we will remain mere slaves or puppets:



With all due respect, however, Marx’s excessive solution of Communist Revolution<sup>169</sup> is not the answer. In general, revolution is too radical, and the chaos it creates eventually results in the opposite, namely, the solidification of yet another regime<sup>170</sup>. More specifically, Communism results in confusion and waste. For, as Aquinas explained, private property is actually **necessary** for human life because: 1) we take better care of property if it is private; 2) if care is undertaken by private individuals, it is more orderly and confusion is avoided; and 3) private property brings contentment

and peace.<sup>171</sup> Moreover, out in the real world, “communist revolutions did take place afterward, and all failed”<sup>172</sup> in various other countries. They failed, as one of the readers hereof, Dr. Hotep, correctly explained, because of the “unceasing hostility & subterfuge of the capitalist powers led by [the] USA”. Thus, it is no surprise that America retained has capitalism, instead.

## 2. Rawls’ Concept of Regulated Welfare Capitalism



Today, the Industrial Revolution has long past. Thus, as per John Rawls, American capitalism has evolved into a more benevolent system of “regulated welfare capitalism”<sup>173</sup>.

According to Rawls, justice is based on “fairness” or “fair play”, of which equality is an “initial” principle.<sup>174</sup> More specifically, he posited two principles of justice: a 1) liberty principle, under which each person has an equal right to the most basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others, and 2) difference, under which social and economic inequalities are arranged so that they are both reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage (to the advantage of the least advantaged), and attached to positions and offices open to all.<sup>175</sup>

To execute the objectives of the second principle, rather than a laissez-faire

system of government wherein government completely stays out of private business enterprise, the government actually steps in and either cooperates, or actually takes on different tasks, and actively regulates certain things itself. For example, to benefit all people, government regulates public schools, roads, transportation, etc., enacts laws governing workers' safety, pollution, etc., makes sure that offices are open for all who may want to run, etc. Such a system, therefore, approaches socialism, because the government does whatever it can to promote equal opportunity for the general welfare of all.<sup>176</sup>

In support, Rawls maintains that such a system is based on “sympathetic compassion” and “morality”.<sup>177</sup> From a utilitarian perspective, he also sees it as more efficient:

Welfare economics is a conception that assimilates justice to benevolence and the latter in turn to the most efficient design of institutions to promote the general welfare. Justice is a kind of efficiency.<sup>178</sup>

However, Rawls' concept can be easily critiqued. First, it should be noted that such a system is based on the social contract theory, in which all people, including egocentric “**selfish**”<sup>179</sup> people, agree to cooperate with one another in order to get out of the state of nature within which survival is of the fittest. Moreover, Rawls may have obtained the title of his work, Justice as Fairness, from Nietzsche who wrote:

*Origin of justice.*—Justice(fairness) originates among those who are approximately *equally powerful* ... Thus justice is repayment and exchange on the assumption of an approximately equal power position.<sup>180</sup>

If so, Rawls either avoided or missed Nietzsche's point, namely, that justice will only be fair when people are equally powerful in the first place. Otherwise, attempts to make all people equal will require powerful people to lower themselves to the mediocrity



of the herd:

There can be no equality where there is in fact a different quanta of power. Equality can only mean the leveling downward of everyone into the mediocrity of the herd.<sup>181</sup>

Nietzsche, of course, sought to philosophically overcome such leveling downward by calling for a cruel and immoral Superman. Out in the real economic world today, however, the ruling class has set forth the following more powerful ideology, that indeed, do its vast repercussions, puts such a Superman to shame!

### 3. My Concept, in Comparison Thereto



In America today, the rich and powerful ruling class seems to have been lowered by regulated welfare capitalism. However, behind its seemingly benevolent veil, it is nothing but “corporate welfare”, namely, “welfare of the rich”, as Dr. Hotep, so aptly indicated. Far worse, thereunder also lies a shrewd, sinister and parasitic evil, debt-capitalism, a seductive scheme through which the ruling class, regardless of the strictures of regulated welfare capitalism, found a way to ravage, rape and pillage even more power and wealth than it ever did before. Such a scheme is also quite cunning because its accompanying ideology causes people to enter into debt voluntarily, thus, by setting such an ideology, the ruling class easily passes the blame for its greed onto others, and gets away with it -- all the way to the bank!!! Thus, it is they, not Nietzsche, who are the criminals of all criminals (*see herein Chapter III, subsection G3*).

Their system is also philosophically ingenious because it seems to cure one of Marx's specific types of alienated labor, i.e., namely, alienation from the product. Speciously, it actually appears to be the antitheses of such alienation because it allows the purchaser to attain any and all sorts of products on credit, even if he or she can not afford them. It allows such attainment, however, too fast, and charges a heavy premium therefore. Eventually, the purchaser will certainly pay two or three times the purchase price due to high interest rates, which, similar to parasites, grow ever larger.

Moreover, debt-capitalism belies and undercuts the benevolent goal of regulated welfare capitalism because it provides, in fact, nothing but hollow appearance. For as explained by the philosophical tradition of phenomenology, the phenomenon (the mere appearance) of a thing, must be distinguished from its noumena (the thing's true essence). Thus, phenomenology recognizes that our perception of mere appearance can be mistaken because we depend on our senses, and that our intellect judges them in relation or comparison to concepts which are not absolute and universal, but rather, were socially constructed by us in the first place, and are thus tied to, and limited by, our particular historical era. More importantly, however, phenomenology demonstrates that we can never reach any thing's noumena, which lies outside our intellect, because such noumena is never present to us within our intellect.<sup>182</sup>

Debt-capitalism exacerbates and augments that fundamental phenomenological problem by granting purchasers the foolish appearance of ownership, namely, temporary use and enjoyment of material objects. Such ownership, however, is hollow because until and unless they pay off the underlying debt, the true essence of full ownership is not present. Thus, in truth, what appears to be present is, in fact, absent and dependent on the future:

Utopia calls for the end of all credit arrangements so that the present does not depend on the future ... modern society is plagued by this and other serious malfunctions.<sup>183</sup>

Most importantly, until full payment is rendered, the appearance of ownership can easily be repossessed, retracted, terminated, etc., if the purchaser becomes unable to pay the debt. Furthermore, such a situation also allows the purchaser to appear to be richer than he or she really is, not only to his or herself, but also to others. Accordingly, debt-capitalism enables purchasers to dupe and render foolish themselves and others.

#### 4. A Specific Product Example of Debt-Capitalism: Mortgages



For a specific example, consider two men who have each saved \$10,000. One placed his money in a bank savings account under his name only, for safe keeping. The other used it as a down payment to purchase a \$100,000 house pursuant to a mortgage.

At first blush, it may seem that the second man is better off because he appears to own that house. However, he lacks presence with the \$90,000 remainder, and thus doesn't really own full title to the house. Moreover, due to the imposed interest rate, even if low, he will eventually pay twice (\$200,000) or three times as much (\$300,000) for the house. Furthermore, he really only has a right to use and enjoy the house, which can be taken away if he suddenly becomes unable to pay the mortgage, because the mortgagee bank will suddenly foreclose on the house, and sell it to someone else. If it is sold for less than the mortgaged amount (\$100,000), the mortgagee bank will be paid off

first, and the second man may be forced to forfeit the \$10,000 down payment. Thus, the man who placed the money in the bank is financially safer and much better off because he does not lack presence with the money's full ownership/title. Moreover, rich capitalists get away with this because what they really and only sell you is a hollow ideology of owning your own home, the proverbial American dream.

Most importantly, the foregoing example assumes that the second man encountered an honest mortgage lender. Far worse, therefore, would be his consequences had he had the bad luck or misfortune of being victimized by predatory lender, instead. The following poster illustrates specific ways in which predatory lenders, i.e., wolves in sheep's clothing, can "eat you alive":



Obviously, this particular problem is so bad that a community group is attempting to take action.<sup>184</sup> Such action, however, may, in fact, be too late. Indeed, far better to take heed hereof, and avoid such wolves entirely ahead of time by saving your money,

patiently waiting to purchase until you have actually accumulated (i.e., rendered present) the full price. Far worse, the elderly, sick, poor, etc., will be victimized first and foremost. Consider, therefore, the caveat imparted, in question and answer fashion, to such groups by the following newspaper article:

### **Some unethical mortgage firms prey on seniors**

**Q: I'm writing to inform people about mortgage companies that prey upon the poor, elderly and people who are seriously ill and in financial need. My mom fell for one of these lenders they call predatory lenders. They severely overvalue your home, which in our case was approximately \$86,000 on a home worth about half that figure. This loan was made to a woman who was 82 years old in 2001. In 2003, mom passed away, leaving her heirs without a will and a home buried under this loan. I am on Social Security income and unable to afford a monthly payment of nearly \$700. Now I am facing the loss of the home I have lived in for 25 years.**

**I know it is too late to save my home, but I am hoping that my story will help someone. Be careful in dealing with these mortgage companies and talk to your parents about finances, or you may one day be in my position.**

**Patricia A. Becker,  
soon to be homeless on South Side**

**A: Sadly, Patricia, you're probably right about your home. It appears it is too late to save it. But, it may not be too late for many other victims.**

The Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (412-391-6732) helps people in your situation by negotiating with lenders to restructure or refinance predatory loans at better terms.

In the last nine months, PCRG as helped restructure about 30 loans for victims of predatory lenders in Allegheny County, according to program director Greg Simmons.

In your case, however, Simmons believes there's

not much he can do, although he is willing to try. One big problem is the loan was in your mom's name, not yours. So there isn't much leverage with the lender.

"The lenders position will be that the payments were made when [the mother] was alive, and the fact that the kids can't pay isn't our fault," Simmons said.

Second, your mom didn't have a will, so ownership of the home doesn't automatically pass to you, making it difficult to negotiate on your behalf.

Predatory loans such as your mom's typically carry sky-high interest rates, exorbitant fees and big repayment penalties. The loans often are marketed through high-pressure and deceptive tactics to desperate or unwitting homeowners who then face foreclosure when they can't keep up with the payments.

According to Patricia's brother, Leo Becker, their mother was in a financial bind and needed a small loan. A mortgage broker showed up at the door and talked her into mortgaging her home for \$86,000, even though homes in similar shape in the neighborhood were selling for only about \$40,000.

"It seems like this lender somehow was reaching people who may be having a bit of a rough time and pounces on the situation," Leo said.

Many predatory lending victims have decent credit and would qualify for regular loans, but are duped into taking large loans at high rates to generate bigger profits for the lender.

Predatory lenders often work in tandem with unscrupulous appraisal firms, which artificially inflate a home's value to make it look as though the borrower qualifies for a larger loan.

"A lender or broker will hire an appraiser to say this is how much money we need the appraisal to be worth, see if you can make it work," Simmons said. "There are enough appraisers out there willing to do that."

Another hallmark of predatory lenders is high-pressure sales tactics. So if someone shows up at your

doorstep uninvited and leans on you excessively, refusing to go away, watch out.

Meanwhile, Patricia, it was kind of you to take the time to write to **warn** others.<sup>185</sup>

Such a warning venerably reminds me of the former prisoner in Plato's cave metaphor, but it will not reach all victims in time.

## 5. A Bigger Problem: Student Loans



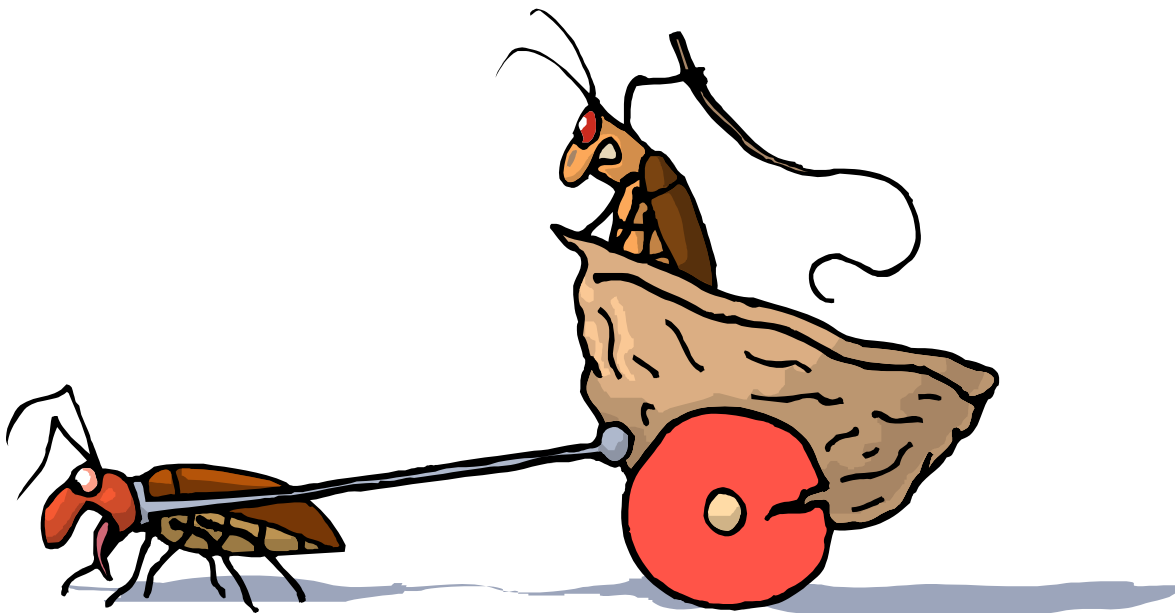
Above and beyond any product or service purchased on credit, student loans are the most evil and cunning of all. For like a stairway to heaven, and a modern-day opiate of the people, they appear to be the way in which all people can suddenly become part of the ruling class. In truth, however, instead of such an elixir, student loans are modern-day hemlock because, first and foremost, and due to federal law passed by former-President Clinton, they are no longer dischargeable in bankruptcy. Thus, student loans must now be added to the old adage that states that all can be avoided except death and taxes.

Second and worst of all, student loans have created an inordinate amount of people with degrees, many more than ever before. The economy, however, has not found a way to create enough jobs to match. Thus, there simply are not enough jobs to go around. Thus, as per the economic principle of supply and demand, this oversupply and

lack of demand, will occur because many people will take the risk, but only so many of them will actually find jobs. The unlucky ones will, therefore, be unduly burdened, and in fact, enslaved by non-dischargeable student loans, most likely, evermore.

## 6. The True Essence of Debt-Capitalism: Slavery

Furthermore, purchasers who become unable to pay their debts may lose not only all of their purchased products and other worldly possessions at once, but also their relationships with others who will suddenly and selfishly abandon them when they become poor, no matter how much they may have “cared”<sup>186</sup> for them in high Hiedeggerean fashion prior. Thus, in summary, the true essence of debt-capitalism is nothing but voluntary servitude because it allows the servant product or service to become the master of the purchaser. Things seemingly owned by the debtor actually own the debtor, instead. Unmasked and unveiled, therefore, debt-capitalism nothing but pure voluntary slavery.



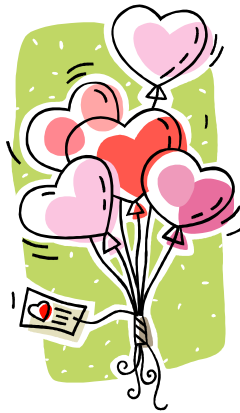
## B. Why Debt-Capitalism Works

Although debt-capitalism turns out to be economic slavery most complete and



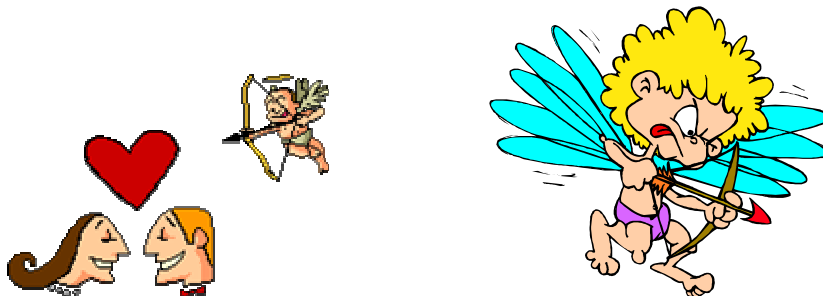
cruel, humans are easily seduced into choosing it voluntarily, regardless, because it exploits their fundamental and “ownmost quality of being a **lack**,”<sup>187</sup> a concept that was best explained by Plato and Heidegger.

### 1. Lack as Explained in Plato’s Symposium



In the Symposium, Plato recorded speeches that had been given at a party about love, the most memorable of which was perhaps that of Aristophanes.

He presented story of Greek mythology which basically began upon the realization of Zeus, the king of the gods, that humankind had become too powerful. At that time, humans were very powerful because they resembled two of us today put together, namely, each had two heads, four arms, four legs, etc. Fearing that they would climb up to and capture the home of the gods, Mount Olympus, Zeus severely weakened them by slicing them in half with a thunderbolt. As a result, humans constantly seek to achieve (or to re-achieve) self-completion by finding their other half.<sup>188</sup>



Socrates also gave a speech about love in the Symposium.<sup>189</sup> He, however, recounted what a woman named Diotima had taught him, namely, that love is really “love of”<sup>190</sup> something. More specifically, it is love of something else which the lover lacks. Love, therefore, is a fundamental condition of lack. Moreover, philosophy *per se* is also a lack, which is easily evident from its etymology -- in Greek, the word “*philein*” means “love of”, and the word “*sophia*” means “wisdom”.<sup>191</sup> Similarly, since it is love of wisdom, wisdom is something foreign to it which it lacks. Accordingly, love is a philosopher, and philosophy is a fundamental condition of lack, also.



As Socrates further explained, humans initially attempt to fill their lack with ephemeral things which do not last. Eventually, however, most of them will progress through the higher mysteries of love, i.e., from corporeal love of just one other person, to loving conversation with that person, then to loving laws and customs which benefit all persons, then to seeking knowledge and education (truth and wisdom), and eventually, to loving the beautiful itself. Others, however, will remain within the lower mysteries of love because they will constantly seek to possess ephemeral things which do not last, to possess them always, to be creative with them, and eventually, to become immortal, i.e., to become a god themselves. Thus, the right way, instead, is progression, namely, to begin with such beautiful things, and therefrom, to endeavor “ever upwards.”<sup>192</sup>

## 2. Lack as Explained in Heidegger's Being in Time

In his most famous work, Being in Time, instead of love, Heidegger was primarily concerned with the question of Being,<sup>193</sup> and more specifically, with “Dasein”, the word he used for “the being of human being.”<sup>194</sup> Unlike philosophers including Descartes<sup>195</sup>, Husserl<sup>196</sup> and Kant,<sup>197</sup> who were basically only concerned with what occurs within the human mind, according to Heidegger, Dasein lies (both inside and) outside the mind, namely, it is “being-in-the-world”.<sup>198</sup> It takes up space in the world, so Dasein is “spatiality”.<sup>199</sup>

Unlike Adam and Eve, however, Dasein was thrown<sup>200</sup> into the world through no sin of its own. Thus, in my opinion, what people may like best about his work, psychologically, and perhaps even subconsciously, is that Heidegger freed us from that guilt trip. Dasein must, however, avoid falling prey to the world via attunement, i.e., by turning away from thrownness and realizing that there is no point in looking.<sup>201</sup> Dasein, therefore, finds itself in such attunement.<sup>202</sup>

Dasein must also avoid inauthenticity,<sup>203</sup> namely, losing itself in tranquillizing<sup>204</sup> idle talk<sup>205</sup> with others which causes entanglement.<sup>206</sup> Dasein does so in order to avoid an uncanny<sup>207</sup> feeling of angst<sup>208</sup> which constantly pursues and threatens<sup>209</sup> Dasein. To prevent angst, Dasein tries to fly away from or escape itself, but such attempts only turn it back toward itself.<sup>210</sup> Dasein, therefore, is only authentic<sup>211</sup> when it avoids its own angst, not by specious and inauthentic idle talk, but rather, by caring deeply for others.<sup>212</sup> Before it can do so, however, Dasein will have to face its own death.<sup>213</sup>

Prior to death, Dasein is, in a word, “lack.”<sup>214</sup> It is imperfect,<sup>215</sup> and unfulfilled<sup>216</sup> in this world. It is on the road to fulfillment, namely, death, but until then, it is not-yet.<sup>217</sup> Only death will make it whole.<sup>218</sup> While alive, therefore, it is an “ownmost quality of

being a lack”,<sup>219</sup> and if such a lack is eliminated, Dasein is dead. Thus, Dasein must learn to deal with its lack, instead.

To try to avoid dealing with its fundamental condition of lack and thinking about death, it will busy itself with everydayness,<sup>220</sup> namely, daily chores, tasks,<sup>221</sup> etc.



In so doing, Dasein also acts inauthentically, and falls prey to curiosity<sup>222</sup> and “greed for the new”.<sup>223</sup> Please, therefore, compare the consequences of curiosity as per Pandora’s box (*see* herein Chapter I, section A), and profane, devalued humanism today which focuses on the “new” (*see* herein Chapter II, section E).

To act authentically instead, Dasein must loose itself by accepting death in order to find itself.<sup>224</sup> It must also choose to avoid inauthenticity, to demand that of itself.<sup>225</sup> Only when it faces death<sup>226</sup> will it hear the call<sup>227</sup> (which is placed to itself from itself) to act authentically by caring about others.<sup>228</sup> It must face angst<sup>229</sup> by acting<sup>230</sup> for others, namely, by voluntarily leaping into<sup>231</sup> the circle<sup>232</sup> of care. In so doing, Dasein will also find its own monumental<sup>233</sup> possibilities<sup>234</sup> and potential<sup>235</sup> in this world.

### 3. Unrestrained Hedonism

Instead of fulfilling the aforementioned fundamental lack, debt-capitalism retards the right progression of humans ever upwards discussed by Plato, and prevents them from finding their monumental possibilities as per Heidegger. Instead, it exponentially

increases selfish hedonism, a philosophical concept based on pleasure which was first calculated quantitatively with no holds barred by Bentham, and later bifurcated qualitatively and restrained with reason by Mill, the latter of course, operates quite like Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, and Plato's chariot metaphor.

Bentham's hedonic calculus<sup>236</sup> basically exalted any and all types of pleasure over pain quantitatively with no restraint whatsoever.



In critiquing that calculus, Mill qualitatively bifurcated pleasures into two types, higher and lower, and called for greater control of the latter.<sup>237</sup> In so doing, Mill restrained hedonism with reason. Accordingly, Mill's bifurcation of pleasures equates to Plato's chariot metaphor in the Phaedrus,<sup>238</sup> which contains two horses.



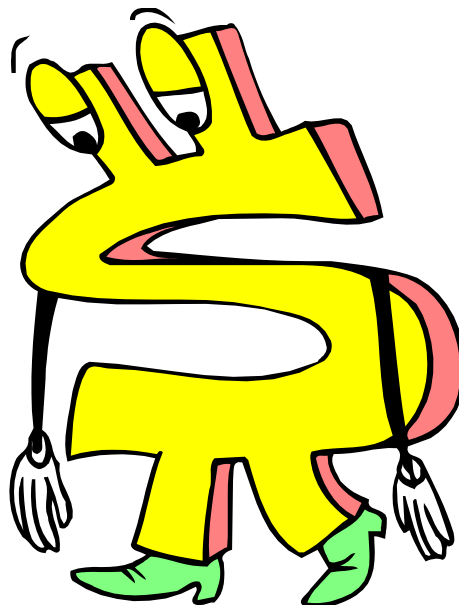
The spirit horse is one of the higher pleasures mentioned by Mill, and the horse of desire is one of the lower. Rather than letting both run wild, however, quite like Mill, the charioteer (reason) reins both in. As explained prior herein, it is also similar to Aristotle's doctrine of the mean (*see* herein Chapter IV, section E) which advocates moderation.

Hedonism is, in fact, the very essence of debt-capitalism, which is also the diametric opposite of restraint. For, instead of limiting purchasers to what they can reasonably afford, debt-capitalism allows them to run wild, i.e., to buy things on credit inauthentically that they could never ever save-up for and purchase authentically. In fact, they may extend themselves so far that every incoming penny goes out to pay debt rather than to savings.



The farther and farther they extend themselves, however, the more they open themselves up economic danger, namely, repossession, retraction, termination, etc., of apparent ownership. Basically, they live for the moment without ever saving for a rainy day, voluntarily creating a situation of latent danger. Thus, fueled both by personal selfishness and the ideology of the ruling class, debt-capitalism without restraint (seemingly apparent freedom), results not in more freedom, but in slavery.

### **C. The Big Picture**



If we were to widen our lens to get a sky-cam view, namely, to see not particular effects (mortgages, student loans, etc.), but to get to the root of the problem, we would see that, as Marx correctly opined, “capitalism in practice functions as a substitute for religion.”<sup>239</sup> Put another way, capitalism flourishes upon the death of the Idea of God because only that Idea can completely fulfill our fundamental condition of lack. Once it is dead, capitalism steps in and seduces people into purchasing seeming substitutes.

Like a parasite, it also feeds on capitalism’s underlying ideology, the idea of being able to be, or to have, anything and everything, namely, a game that no one can win, upon which “modern capitalism is borne and develops.”<sup>240</sup> Basically, capitalists today have seductively opened up a space that used to be filled with the Idea of God (which would instead talk you out of purchasing things because to heaven, as they say, you can’t take it with you), and have set forth the ideology that such a space can, and should, be filled with anything and everything that your little heart desires.

The most shrewd and cunning part of the entire scheme is that such slavery is not imposed involuntarily. Rather, rich capitalists obtain other peoples’ consent<sup>241</sup> voluntarily. Such consent, indeed, absolves them of any crime, and more importantly, passes the guilt of greed onto the purchaser, making it seem as though it was their fault. Admittedly, therefore, this creates “conceptual incarnation” and “comfortable” captivity”, as Dr. Hotep correctly commented.

If such a situation were not so financially heinous and morally unconscionable, one might, indeed, marvel with awe and wonder at such an incredible intellectual “accomplishment,” namely, seducing people into choosing voluntary slavery. In a word, “wow!”



# WOW!



Why is this so incredible? Because rich capitalists are really getting away with theft, larceny, burglary, embezzlement, etc., right under your nose, and right before your very eyes, yet escape all penalty therefore. Put another way, instead of stealing it, i.e., committing this or any related crime for which they could get caught, they steal it underhandedly by getting your voluntary consent, lawfully. Wow!

Essence, however, can't be bought with material commodities.<sup>242</sup> Neither can all good things aforementioned with respect to both God and humankind, including but not limited to, presence, meaning, true and lasting fulfillment of lack, humanism, happiness, hope, etc. Rather, as Augustine indicated, "the soul lives by avoiding what it dies by desiring,"<sup>243</sup> or, in this particular circumstance, by purchasing!

## **D. Chapter Conclusion**

In American society today, humans easily fall prey to debt-capitalism, a cunning economic system which causes more alienation than Marx ever imagined, and undercuts the more benevolent system of regulated welfare capitalism which we have employed to attain equality. It turns us into puppet slaves of the "Culture Clowns"<sup>244</sup> of the ruling class. Like a parasite, it feeds on humankind's fundamental condition of lack as explained metaphysically by Plato and phenomenologically by Heidegger. Rather than fulfilling such lack, it opens up a space that used to be filled with the Idea of God, and as a substitute, allows hedonism to run wild with no restraint of reason, which only results



in the opposite, slavery.

Fear not, however, for a new, true hero is about to emerge herefrom; an answer, an antidote, that will prevail over all evil aforementioned. Come, let us learn its name ...



**Chapter VI:**  
**The Answer:**  
**A Self-Negating Hero**



## A. Introduction

Succinctly stated, we need a hero.

We need a potent and powerful antidote to the aforementioned evil, a solid specific answer to the following rhyming riddle:

Stronger than the rest,  
Better than the best,  
More virtuous, courageous and pure,  
Than all the others to be sure.  
Yet, gentle, humble and kind,  
Who saves not the self, but all humankind...

Herefrom it now emerges unmasked and revealed:

We need not an egological “*Übermensch*” (German for “overman” or “superman”), but rather a humble, self-negating hero. We need David, not Goliath. We need a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, not a barbarian. Most importantly, we need a complex character, a combination of power and strength, who sees a “future beyond culture”<sup>245</sup> or secularization<sup>246</sup>, who maximizes each individual possibility, climbs every mountain, and yet does so cautiously with moderation and restraint of reason.

Come with me,  
And you shall soon see,  
That the hero truly lies in ...

## B. Call to Arms: Ultimate Deconstruction



To breathe life into our new self-negating hero, we must, and perhaps surprisingly so, do more deconstruction than ever before!!! Tyrannical deconstructive freedom (*see* page 66, and all of Chapter IV) has hardly left any stone unturned – all except one, that is, namely, philosophy *per se*. Thus, to find our hero, we, as the innovative directors of a new film, must turn the eye of the camera inward inside ourselves.



We must realize that it was, in fact, philosophy's egocentricity that caused its demise. For today, despite all of the aforementioned philosophical texts calling for care and Spirit out in society, out in the real world, with the exception of academic circles, philosophy is practically dead.

Its death is simple to explain. Descartes opened the door to egocentricity, which by now has "blossomed" into full-fledged greed. No one seeks a highway to heaven for the right reason. Rather, they seek only wealth. Debt-capitalism, in fact, allows people to appear to be even richer than they really are. Tyrannical deconstructive freedom basically tells them to "be all you can be"<sup>247</sup> and to "just do it"<sup>248</sup> with no holds barred. Philosophy, in fact, is seen as slavery *per se*, namely, the call for ethical restraint and moderation which would cut off such freedom.

By starting such egocentricity in the first place, philosophy caused its own death through a slow but continuously impending suicide. Indeed, it killed itself with its very own egocentric, deconstructive hand.

Moreover, philosophy has only itself to blame. For, it could have inserted disclaimers in texts warning readers not to take concepts too far, calling, of course, for restraint. Instead of taking such action, philosophers simply shy away from the real world where non-philosophers (or perhaps even philosophers) could, like Hitler, use and abuse their concepts to annihilate entire races of people, conducting philosophy passively amidst the seeming shelter of academia. Nor have they done anything to correct the stereotypes assumed by non-philosophers, which basically view philosophers as weird, cowardly introverts who can't "cut it" out in the real world, thus, all philosophers do is secretly attempt to undermine all authority and tradition from those who can, from the seeming shelter of solitude.

I, therefore, hereby call philosophy to arms.



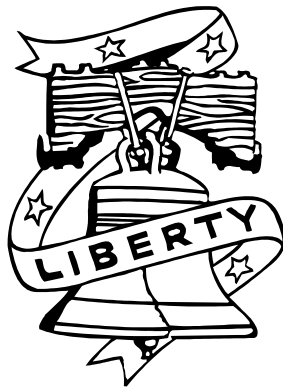
Forthwith, I serve this very summons, this subpoena, this writ of mandamus, respectfully requesting philosophy to have the courage to do its business out in the real world, to include disclaimers, and to correct the aforementioned stereotypes and all others. In short, I challenge philosophy to undertake the last and ultimate deconstructive project, its egocentric self, which has led to its own death.

### C. Declaration of the Death of the Declaration of the Death of the Idea of God

In order to deconstruct its egocentric self, philosophy must begin by declaring the death of Nietzsche's declaration. For, death leads not to more death, because it already is just that. Death is an extreme, and extremes merely lead to other extremes. Thus, death leads to life, and deconstruction leads to construction. Death is also dialectical. Crucifixion becomes resurrection. Most importantly, self-negation leads not to death or slavery, but to elevation and transcendence.

Basically, philosophy must resurrect the Idea of God by humbling itself, by readjusting the camera lens to create a film that helps us see life differently.<sup>249</sup> Thus, far, it has focused instead on egocentricity, instead of serving that Idea in subordinate fashion, with humble and contrite heart!

Thus, I hereby emancipate philosophy from its backward bondage, and in fact, call it forward to its very own freedom!



Let it be known, however, that this call is not for extreme self-sacrifice, suicide or Buddhist utter emptiness.<sup>250</sup> Rather, this mission, should you choose to accept it (that's right, I said "you"! Are you up to this challenge?), requires moderate self-negation, and courageous action instead of listless Buddhist inaction.<sup>251</sup> Most importantly, it must realize that resurrected, the Idea of God will not limit philosophy's deconstructive

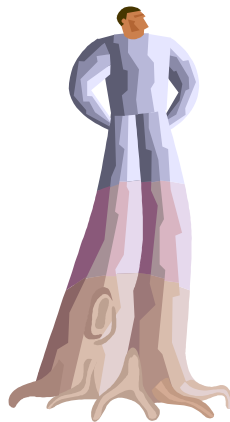
freedom, or cut off its Hiedeggerean possibilities, but rather, it will recapture respect for philosophy which has, both inside and outside academic circles, been lost.

#### **D. Kryptonite: Despair**

I, therefore, call philosophy out of its present state of despair amidst academia.



As aforementioned, out in the real world, philosophy is dead because it can't be used to obtain wealth, ambition, or the mere appearance of both. Within academic circles, philosophy isn't doing so well,<sup>252</sup> either. Philosophers are bored with tedious deconstructive games of word torture, which merely coil and recoil the roots of language, which Derrida, the grammatological gatekeeper, called "despair"<sup>253</sup> himself.



Despair is derived from the Latin word "*desparare*," which means to move away from hope.<sup>254</sup> Thus, it is similar to comic-book Superman's kryptonite. More importantly, it is the absolute death of all humankind, both out in the world and inside our minds, for all people everywhere, philosophers and non. This is because, as the

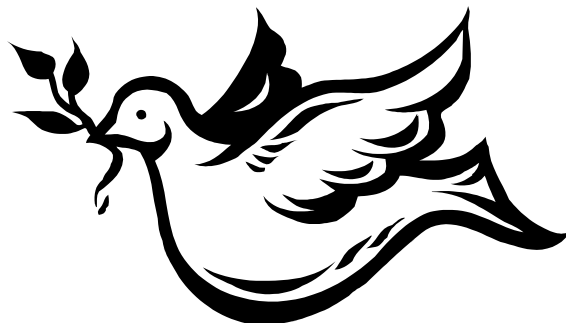
mythological tale of Pandora's box explains, hope is what gives humankind the inner strength to deal with suffering and to prevail over evil. If it is lost, humankind is not merely devalued, but absolutely dead.

#### **E. Inspiration: Hope**

Whereas despair is humankind's death, hope is its life. Hope lies not in egocentric selfishness, but in selflessness, for its inspiration is the Idea of God. Thus, it dialectically lies in two places: 1) the Idea of God, and 2) each individual person.

Specifically, the only thing that can prevail over despair is the Idea of God. When push comes to shove in this dog-eat-dog world, each person seeks a way out. No ephemeral person place or thing, no matter how big, tall, impressive or expensive, can provide the escape they seek. For, only the Idea of God affords transcendence, elevation, upwards and higher, and eventually, to pure peace.

For, while on earth we will pursue wealth and greed, but fall at almost every turn, because it is simply not possible to satisfy all selfish desires. Such failure will enslave us by causing us to feel lower, psychologically. True freedom, instead, comes from the Idea of God which inspires us to forsake such things, and to choose higher ones instead. As Dr. Hotep beautifully commented, "The kingdom of heaven, where God resides, is within." Such inspiration, therefore, allows us to become the masters of our own lives, to transcend evil on the wonderful wing of transcendental hope.





## **F. A New Attitude: Mental Moderation**

Whereas the Idea of God inspires such hope, each of us needs to put it into practice. For, as aforementioned, extreme self-sacrifice is not necessary, rather, moderate self-negation is requisite. Thus, we need not deny all desire, ambition, appearance, etc., we simply need a new attitude about them.

First, as former-President Roosevelt said, we need to walk softly and carry a big stick. This means that most of the time, we need to act like a humble Clark Kent, but always be ready to become Superman for unselfish reasons at a moment's notice.

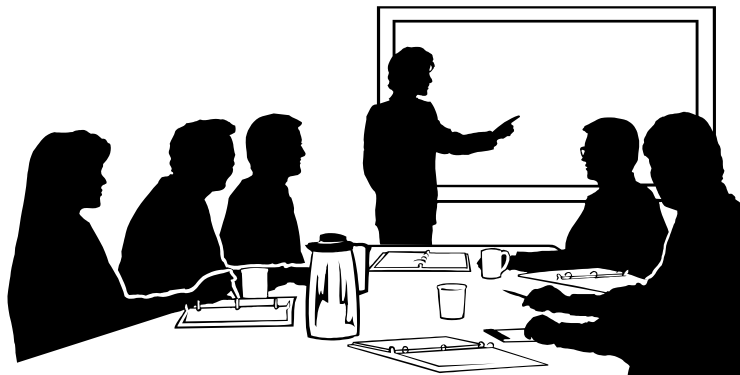
For example, recall the following parable:

On a Sabbath Jesus went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there observing carefully.

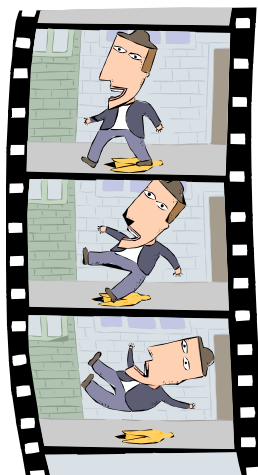
He told a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the places of honor at the table. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at the table in the place of honor. A more distinguished guest than you may have been invited by him, and the host who invited both of you may approach you and say, 'Give your place to this man,' and then you would proceed with embarrassment to take the lowest place. Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he may say, 'My friend, move up to a higher position.' Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."<sup>255</sup>

Applying that parable to my life, I, a duly licensed attorney, who passed the bar the very first time, were to physically sit at the head of a conference table with other scholars, and attempt to take over the meeting by extolling that and other personal accolades, I would quickly be humiliated verbally, and physically relegated to the rear. If, on the other hand, I humbly sit in the back and praise the accomplishments of others, I

will be elevated by invitation to the front, and appreciated by all. This therefore, is a specific example of the humble choices I make daily, indeed, practicing what I preach, because I truly believe that “whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”<sup>256</sup>



More importantly, we also need a resolute mental attitude to face the little or large deaths we face every day. For, as aforementioned, even if we are extremely selfish, we simply can't get everything we want. Thus, the best way to deal with desire, ambition, appearance, etc., is to walk softly, and carry a big stick, i.e., always be prepared mentally for the death, end, etc., of all of our temporal and ephemeral things and endeavors. If so, we will not be reduced to our knees, rather, we can use such a mental stick to help us get up, dust ourselves off, and try all over again:



Thus, and perhaps surprisingly, I not only call, but in fact, challenge, you to follow your dreams, laso the moon,<sup>257</sup> explore your existential potential possibilities, and climb every mountain:

***Climb Every Mountain***  
(from *The Sound of Music* movie)

Verses:

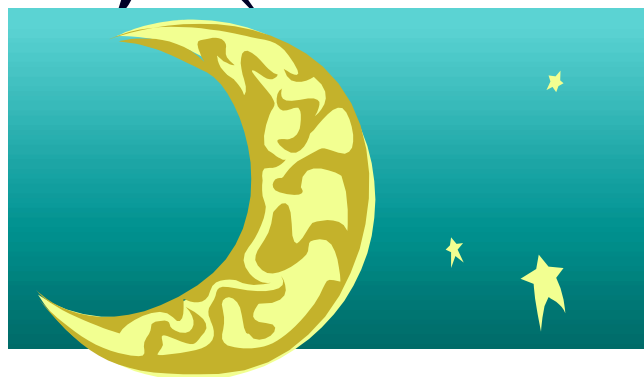
Climb every mountain, search high and low,  
Follow every by way, every path you know

A dream that will need, all the love you can give  
Everyday of your life, for as long as you live

Refrain:

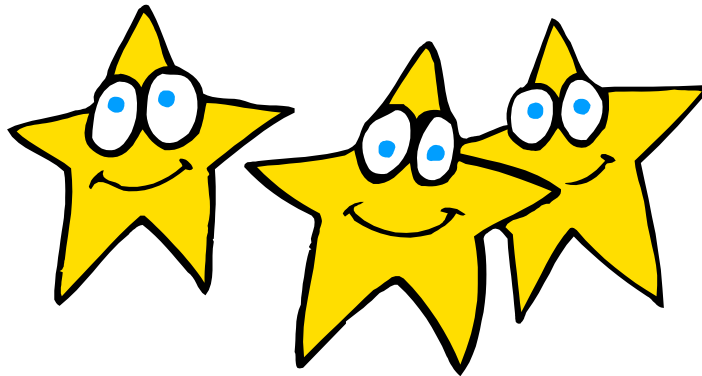
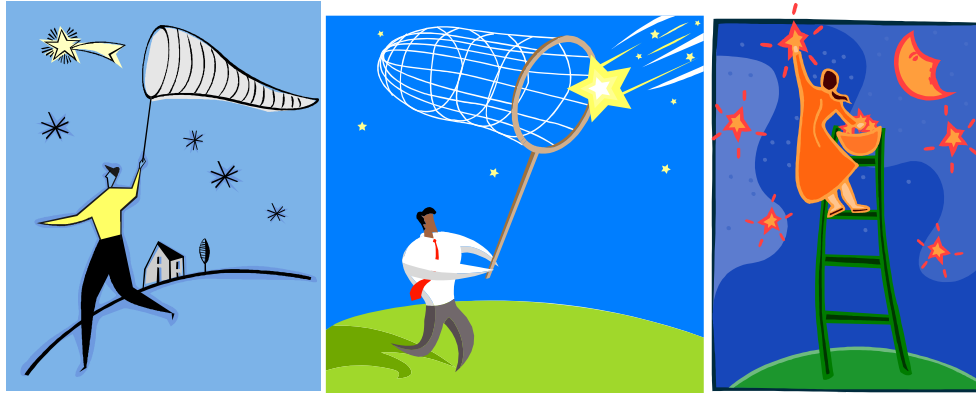
**Climb every mountain, ford every stream  
Follow every rainbow, until you find your dream**







I would like you to wonder if the stars are lit up so that each of us can find our own someday.<sup>258</sup> Better still, I hope you actually catch one or more of your own:



I only suggest that you do so with a selfless and cautious attitude, based upon moderation.

## **G. Call for Artists: Inspiring Others**

### **1. Art That Manifests Hope**

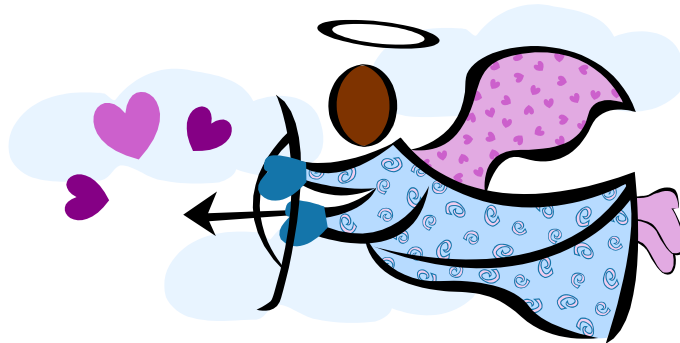
Of all people, artists perhaps have the best ability to manifest hope for others.



They have a way of tapping into divine inspiration, as well as the opposite, utter

despair, and allowing both (and much more) to shine through their works. Most importantly, they have a choice – they can either use their art to inspire others, or to drag them down into despair. I, therefore, must place a specific call for artists to do the former selflessly, for others.

Today, technology has caused art to “lose its halo,”<sup>259</sup> to forsake its “aura.”



It “operates in an atmosphere of twilight and decline.”<sup>260</sup> Instead of “grandiose metaphysical moments that could disclose the full essence of truth in all its glory,”<sup>261</sup> it sets forth weakness. Instead of elevating inspiration, it exhibits depressing everydayness.

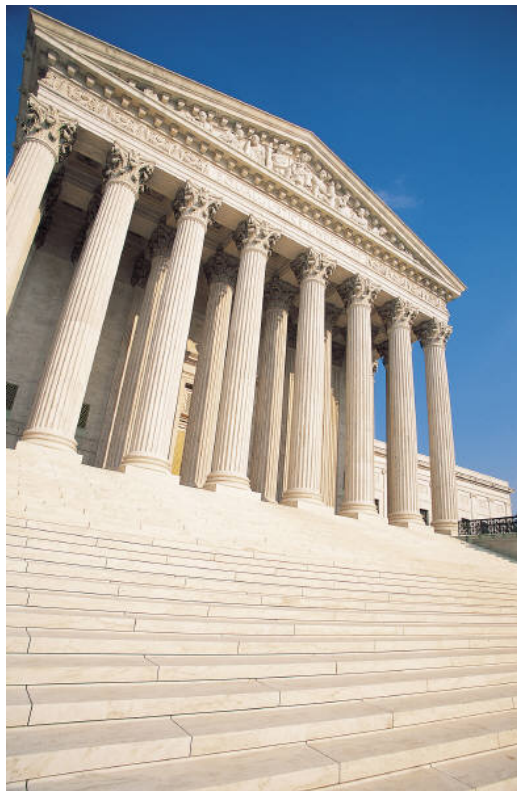
Take, for example, Andy Warhol’s famous Campbell’s soup can. What is its effect on you?



Could it possibly inspire any of us to do anything but eat soup? For, it is well-settled that man does not live on bread alone. More importantly, why would anyone appreciate such art, except perhaps for a laugh? The answer is weakness.

With the above exception noted, the only type of person who would appreciate it one who is weak, one who would not want to be inspired, a selfish, lazy person who would not want to even attempt to climb a mountain. Moreover, psychologically, this ties in with Freud's projection theory (*see* herein Chapter III, section E). Instead of looking at something wonderful and glorious, which makes people, in comparison, feel poor, weak, inadequate, etc., today's society would rather view dull and drab everyday things, or even exhibit sadness and despair, which in contrast, makes them feel better. I, for one, would not even want to be around a person who feels better by passively looking at a soup can, nor the artist who created such "art."

Consider instead, the following picture of the United States Supreme Court:



The artist obviously angled the camera lens to effectively enhance its impressive height, both physical and substantive. It certainly inspires me. What do you think? Even



if you do not feel equally elevated, would you at least agree that it is better than the boring soup can?

Thus, we need to deconstruct “artists” such as Nietzsche, the works of which devalue humankind, and call other artists to elevate others by depicting manifestations of Hope, instead. Specifically, we need a religious approach to art, such as during the Middle Ages, which appreciated art primarily in terms of its representation of the Divine.<sup>262</sup> We need art that invites us to “honor the original,”<sup>263</sup> namely, God *per se*, not an everyday soup can, etc. Moreover, and with all due respect to Kant’s concept of Sublime disinterested taste (*see* herein Chapter IV, section C), which denounced ornamentation as mere embellishment, ornament on the periphery is, in fact, important because it “points” to the main subject self-reflexively, and thus, is very philosophical.<sup>264</sup>

Most importantly, art should be an evocation, a “door” through which the Idea of God enters into the sensible world, otherwise art images will continue to deny the incarnation of the spirit and abandon the physical world to the darkness of evil corruption and despair.<sup>265</sup> Indeed, instead of opening Pandora’s box to evil, would it not be better to open this type of door?

## **2. Critique of Gigantic, Fast-Paced Images and Thinking that is Too Freely Open**

Many a philosopher has lamented the side-effects of modern technology.<sup>266</sup> Rather than a peaceful respite, it causes an “ontic craze”<sup>267</sup> that allows us to disregard who we are, frees us from having to belong to anything, and lets us loose ourselves in flashing fast-paced images. We can become techno-road runners<sup>268</sup> who, spoiled also by various remote controls, can change the channel, click in, on, out, etc., in a fraction of a second.

Even television shows have picked up the pace of the internet. Programs that once provided an idyll oasis such as “The Waltons”, have mainly gone by the wayside. We don’t want to be bored to tears with such family television. Instead, we want to loose ourselves meaningless shuffle.

We don’t want to bear witness to anything<sup>269</sup>. Rather, it is, indeed, more fun to be “ever ready for a new kind of play” that, unfortunately, is nothing more than “hasty customizing”<sup>270</sup>, which lacks integrity.

Thus, Heidegger and others have denounced such “picturing” of “gigantic” larger-than-life images as a circus of enchanting inauthenticity whereby we can loose ourselves in the “enthraling absorption”<sup>271</sup> of things that make everyone feel good. So, instead of “affirming”<sup>272</sup> the gigantic by an “indifferent absence of thinking”<sup>273</sup> whereby philosophy has “fallen asleep”<sup>274</sup>, they advocate active thinking that is “freely open”.<sup>275</sup> Their goal is to take power (the will to power) that culture and technology have given to gigantic images and give it back to thinking.<sup>276</sup> They want to remove the “rift”<sup>277</sup> between the image and reality.

As Dr. Hotep noted, such ideas are not really free, but rather, limited to western moral/ethical traditions. Far worse, none of indicate **what** we should be freely thinking **about!** Thus, with all due respect, although they benevolently seek to free us from such gigantic images, I must take issue to that because, even though it may be fun to freely play in thought, they are placing us at risk of loosing ourselves in such free thinking, too! Thus, they merely present us with yet another ominous Pandora’s box, the contents of which is not only evil in general, but slavery specifically, that we should, indeed, protect ourselves from “freely opening.” Accordingly, I respectfully profer the following common ground, instead, upon which we could all mutually agree. If we actively seek

out images that inspire us, regardless whether gigantic or fast-paced, and **do** something about them, without ever losing sight of their hidden meaninglessness, we will prevail by not falling prey<sup>278</sup> to freely open meaninglessness thought.

For example, if I merely gaze upon the foregoing U.S. Supreme Court picture, and do nothing more, my actions would be just as inauthentic and meaningless as the picture is *per se*. However, if while realizing that it is nothing but a picture, I allow it to inspire me to get through law school in general, or to specifically draft and edit petitions for certiorari to serve real-life clients (I have, in fact, personally written and/or edited not one but three), I will prevail over the admittedly meaningless picture by actively securing, executing and manifesting Meaning, i.e, actually **doing** something about it above and beyond mere open thinking which could wind up enslaving us instead.

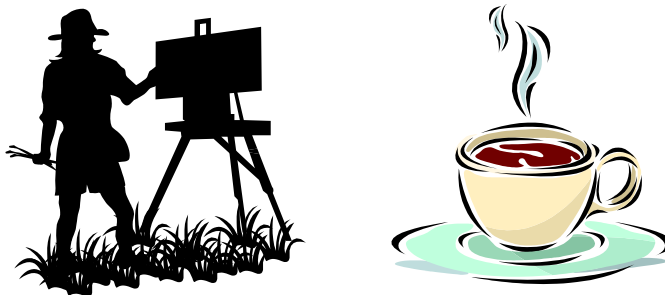
#### **H. Law: Inside and Out**

Human law out in society, however, is not the answer. Thus, I must also respectfully disagree with those that deem it “our new hope.”<sup>279</sup> For, as aforementioned (*see* herein Chapter II, subsection C2), it simply cannot cover all vices, judges cannot see truth inside someone’s soul, etc. Instead, the answer lies within each of us, namely, inside the restraint of moderation which we must choose to place upon ourselves. After all, a truly wise man judges himself.<sup>280</sup> Thus, if personally chosen with reason, which requires, which requires strength,<sup>281</sup> moderate restraint will result in freedom instead of slavery.



## I. Suffering: Strength to Rise Above

We also need a new attitude about suffering. If we weakly allow it to consume us, we will die from despair. Instead, we need to face it, push it down, stand on it, and, quite like the aforementioned big stick, use it to “rise above.”<sup>282</sup> Like a film director that changes the camera’s perspective, we need to regard, for example, a cup as half full rather than half empty.



Basically, therefore, philosophy’s next task is not to merely think “freely open”,<sup>283</sup> and of course, not to learn what to think, but “how” to think.<sup>284</sup>

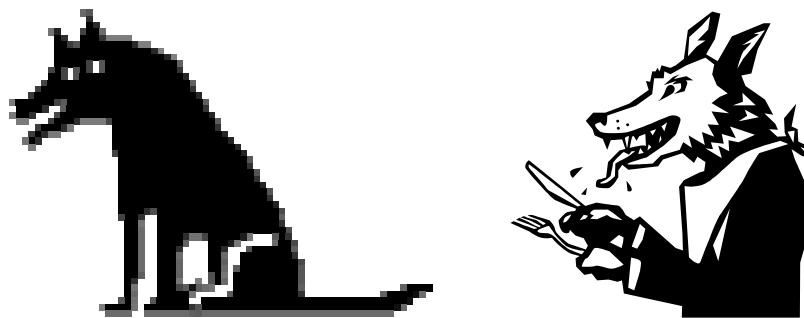
## J. Back in the Habit: Radical Return



Before you decide “how” to think, consider whether, since our society is already plagued by tyrannical deconstructive freedom, i.e., extreme radicalism, if we act radical therein, are we not weak followers rather than strong leaders? If, on the other hand, we were to truly act radically, we would have to do the opposite, wouldn’t we?

**Thus, I hereby adamantly advocate that the most important lesson that people should learn from philosophy today, especially young students, and as early as possible, is that by merely acting radically within a radical society, they are merely slaves to such radicalism. They are merely culture clowns, controlled by society, the puppeteer. They are not leaders, but foolish followers. They are not the master and commander of their own existence, but mere slaves, sheep, and handmaidens. Do you see this now? Have I unveiled it for you? A true radical would instead find the mental strength and fortitude to do the opposite!!!**

Specifically, in my opinion, one should get back in the habit and return to the Idea of God. That, in fact, is “how” we must think. Otherwise, we will unwittingly leave ourselves “freely open” to abuse by others, who will pretend to lead, but take advantage, and instead of protecting us like a good Shepherd, allow us to be devoured by wolves...



Consider also, therefore, the following allegory:

George stood over the dead body of the sheep. The sheep at his feet was one of the 200 sheep that died that day. George's body felt cold and weary.

George turned to the sheep that had survived the wolf attack and shouted, “How many of us are left?” There were only 30 sheep still alive.

“George, what will we do? Who did this?” the remaining sheep asked him.

“I will determine who did this and decide what is best. I will have an answer at sunrise tomorrow,” George said. George turned and walked slowly off into the field by himself.

The next day at sunrise, all the sheep gathered around the large rock where George would speak. A hush fell over the sheep when George climbed atop the rock and raised his head.

“I know who did this,” George bellowed. “It was the same man who killed my father. It was the farmer!” The group’s eyes widened and they began to talk among themselves. George continued: “We must rid our world of this evil threat to us and to all the animals of the farm. We must find the farmer and kill him.” The sheep’s conversations grew louder, so loud that George had to ask the group to quiet down before he could continue.

Silence came, but one of the sheep near the back shouted, “This wasn’t the work of the farmer. This was the work of a pack of wolves!” George quickly replied, “Yes, you are correct. The farmer is in league with the wolves to wipe all of us animals out. The farmer is evil and conspires with all those who are evil as well.” This sent the sheep into frenzy.

“Kill the farmer!” the group shouted.

In the following months, George organized all the sheep into an army, despite the fact that some sheep didn’t want to join. First, he had them locate the farmer’s house. Now, he was creating a plan to kill the farmer. He would finally be able to avenge his father’s death. Unfortunately for George, more and more of the sheep were starting to doubt whether the farmer had anything to do with the attack. After rumors started to spread, some sheep questioned George’s ideas, and dissent was growing in the ranks. George decided to give another speech.

“Fellow sheep, I know some of you have doubts about whether the farmer was to blame in the vicious attack on us sheep. Let me assure you, it was the farmer who attacked us. I heard him conspire with the wolves. I’ve seen him buying more guns and he is ready to attack us again! We must kill the farmer before he can kill any more of us. The farmer is a vicious man. Have you seen the way

he treats his own family? He beats his wife and takes his belt to the children's backs. The farmer is a cruel and vicious man and it is our duty to protect ourselves and all the other animals of the farm by destroying the threat of the farmer!"

That night, the sheep killed the farmer. In the days that passed, some of the sheep had to stay at the farmer's house to care for his family. Without the farmer, the house was in disarray. Back at the field, George was back on top of the large rock, speaking again to the sheep.

"Fellow sheep, the threat of the farmer has passed. But we still must care for his family because we have a responsibility to help all creatures of the farm. I am sending ten more sheep to the house this afternoon to aid in the family's recovery."

The sheep who remained in the field were unsettled by George's plans. "You are sending too many sheep to care for the family. There is no one left to guard us if the wolves should return, one of the sheep said. The other sheep agreed with him.

"The wolves are not a major threat to us. Once the farmer was destroyed, our only major threat was destroyed. I will take care of the wolves myself. Don't worry about them. Go care for the farmer's family," George commanded. And the 10 sheep went, leaving only 10 remaining in the field.

That night, while the sheep in the field slept and the sheep in the farmer's house cared for his family, the wolves returned. The sheep in the field were awakened by screams of agony from the sheep around them, as the wolves tore into their flesh. As the pack of wolves devoured the sheep in the field, the sheep from the farmer's house saw what was happening and hurried back to the field to attack the wolves. The sheep from the house were disorganized and came at the wolves in packs of 10, the first 10 having left the house faster than the second 10. As each group arrived, the wolves gobbled them up until all the sheep had been eaten. The wolves licked their lips hungrily and grinned evil grins. "Foolish sheep," they said. The wolves moved over the field. The cows were next.<sup>285</sup>



## K. Chapter Conclusion

Is that how this tale should end? Should we allow ourselves to be not only preyed upon, but devoured by others? Or, should we have the strength to construct a mental fortress within our minds, based upon, and elevated and inspired by, the Idea of God, the good Shepherd who protects us from such wolves?

For, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, will certainly search even for just one lost sheep:

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So to them he addressed this parable. “What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it? And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy and, upon his arrival home, he calls together his friends and neighbors and says to them, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’<sup>286</sup>



Thus, He is the specific Hope of all hope that is not seen, which is what Augustine meant when he said: “we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope.”<sup>287</sup> Now, you know His name. His identity has been revealed; the riddle has been answered.

Hope, however, is dialectical. It lies both in the inspirational Idea of God, and also in each of us, if and only if, however, we choose to be inspired therefrom, and more importantly, if we choose to actively **do** something about it. Such a hero, therefore, is no stranger. Rather, that hero lies in:



## ***POSTLUDE***

### ***Hero***

(Artist: Mariah Carey)

#### Verses:

There's a hero  
If you look inside your heart  
You don't have to be afraid  
Of what you are  
There's an answer  
If you reach into your soul  
And the sorrow that you know  
Will melt away

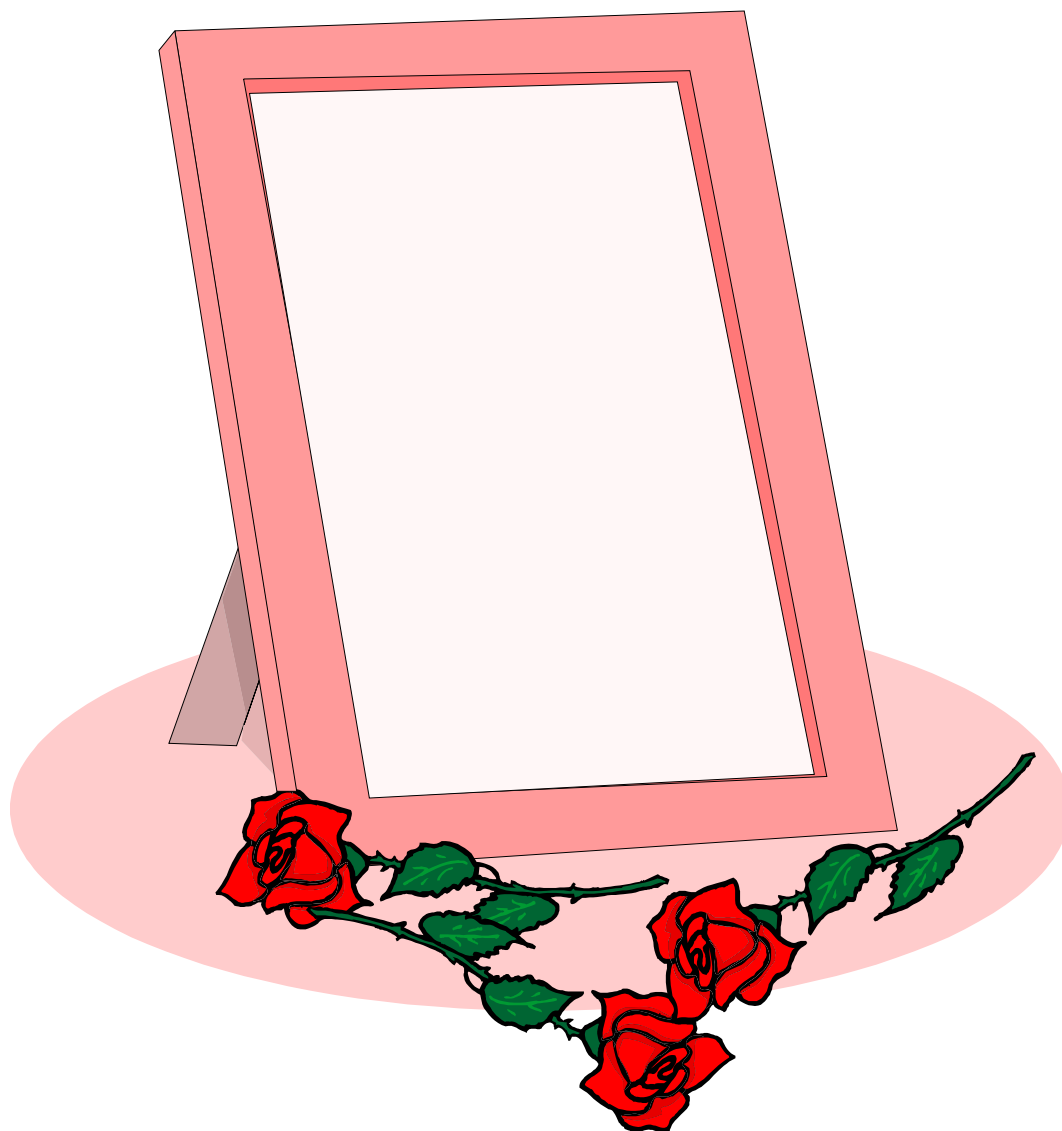
It's a long road  
When you face this world alone  
No one reaches out a hand  
For you to hold  
You can find love  
If you search within yourself  
And the emptiness you felt  
Will disappear

Lord knows  
Dreams are hard to follow  
But don't let anyone  
Tear them away  
There will be tomorrow  
In time  
You'll find the way

#### Refrain:

*And then a hero comes along  
With the strength to carry on  
And you cast your fears aside  
And you know you can survive  
So, when you feel like hope is gone  
Look inside you and be strong  
And you'll finally see the truth  
That a hero lies in....*

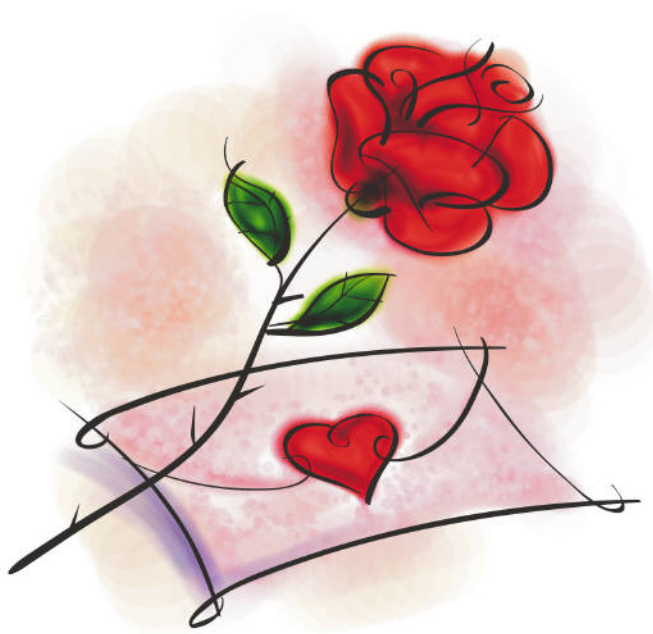




**YOU!**

**Chapter VII:**

**Come Back to Me  
With All Your Heart**



## **A. Introduction**

A well-known wine commercial's slogan used to say: "we will sell no wine before its time." Similarly, if the Hegelian self-negation and Augustinian return to the Idea of God advocated in the preceding chapter has not hit home for you yet, take your time.

Some people will take longer to reach the same conclusion. Others, unfortunately for themselves and for others, simply never will. Certainly, coming back to such a conclusion with open heart is much better than doing it unwillingly.

Consider, for example, how many parents force religion onto their children. By so insisting, they may wind up causing their kids to run from it instead. That is what happened to St. Augustine, and to a lesser extent, to me, too.

## **B. St. Augustine**

St. Augustine was the son of Monica, a woman who was eventually canonized as a saint, also. Albeit for the right reasons, she imposed the Roman Catholic faith on him in such a way that he, prior to becoming a saint, of course, did many a bad thing.<sup>288</sup> In his youth, he committed many sins, such as stealing fruit from a neighbor's tree for no good reason, whatsoever. Had he been starving, that sin might have been somewhat understandable or excusable. He did it, however, due to peer pressure, just for kicks.<sup>289</sup>

Far worse, after he grew up, he committed many more of higher gravity, such as having a child out of wedlock. He also tried other religions, but found no answers or peace with any. Thus, eventually, after pursuing such initially pleasurable sins, and suffering through their painful consequences, he came back to the Catholic faith on his own.<sup>290</sup> Not only did he come back, but he also helped many others find or understand their faith, including me.

### C. My Story

My mother was comparable to St. Monica. She not only wanted me to go to church, but to get actively involved therein. Thus, rather than just attending, I used to cantor, which gave me more to do than just sit or stand in the pews.

In 1993, however, I moved to Florida all by myself. Since she was not there to force me, I did not go to church regularly. At times, in fact, I didn't think about faith at all, turning instead to fun in the sun, and other youthful activities. Things went great for a while, but suddenly, I suffered a grave problem. I kept hoping that things would change, but they did not. Finally, one night when I had become quite afraid, I tried to sleep but couldn't. Then, I suddenly found myself praying. I didn't do it intentionally, because by then, I was half asleep. Nor did I do so because of someone else. An incredible feeling of revelation enveloped me and comforted me. It was then that I realized that I believed in God because **I** believed.

So, after I returned to Pittsburgh, I resumed cantoring. To date, I have done so at two different Roman Catholic churches. I was also honored by being permitted to cantor my law school graduation mass at Duquense University's chapel.

Recently, I have had yet another revelation. I have just learned, the hard way, in fact, that you can count on other (but not all) parishioners, whereas other friends, relatives, etc., may leave you to die. For instance, I called an architect friend of mine to ask a question, but did not receive a response for a month, whereas one of my fellow parishioners came to my aid quite quickly.

Thus, I have personally learned on a broader spectrum, that my parents were and are right about many more things than I could ever imagine when I was very young. St. Augustine, I, and many other children, however, may not come to that conclusion, or

willingly embrace their faith, until they have tried the opposite and suffered the consequences.

#### **D. Rich = Poor?**

Rich people may believe that they can buy happiness. They may already have everything they could ever want. So, they may be the last people to embrace Idea of God or Philosophy. They may even laugh at less affluent people who need Hope to survive.

##### **1. Their Own Worst Enemy**

Indeed, rich people may see no need for Hope at all. The only kind of Hope that they may seem to need is to get through the workday to return home to their riches. Indeed, they may really hate their jobs if such jobs are less luxurious. Going to a good school such as Duquesne University may, indeed, pale in comparison to their mansions. Instead of taking Duquesne's slogan, "do more", to heart, they may fail in school, and in life, because they may already have everything they want. Thus, an unsung hero, such as Rocky Balboa, may overtake them. A poor turtle may overtake such a rich hare. In short, they may be their own worst enemy!

##### **2. Avoiding the Appearance of Poverty**

Far worse, many of them avoid the appearance of poverty at all costs. They pretend to have no faith, because, according to Feuerbach's projection theory of God (*see* herein Chapter III, section E), the poorer a person is, the more things he or she projects onto God. The more poverty one has, the more one praises God and Hopes for things one lacks. Thus, rich people realize that the more one praises God, the more one extols one's own poverty, and the poorer one appears to others! So, many never openly praise God, go to church, etc., to avoid the appearance of poverty.

However, if one were to pierce that rich veil, that apparent but inauthentic mask

of wealth, one would most likely find an equally impoverished soul, whereas underneath poverty, one might find a righteous soul, kept under wraps, under lock and key, like the note that Pascal hid in his coat (*see* herein Chapter III, section C), to avoid social ridicule. Review the lyrics of *Nessun Dorma* (*see* Prelude, subsection B1), and ask yourself if it is quite an appropriate anthem for the selfless and unnamed, awesome and virtuous and faithful hero which is emerging herefrom...

### **3. False Friends**

Rich people may also find out the hard way that their seeming friends are untrue. I know many rich people who have very few friends because such friends were not there for them in times of need. More specifically, such false friends gave them the appearance of friendship in order to partake of their wealth, but when needed, left them high and dry. Instead, such “friends” were actually jealous all the while, so when trouble hit their frich “friends”, they reveled and rejoiced in it. Thus, once such a lesson is learned, many rich people opt not to have many friends at all.

### **4. Money Can’t Buy Everything**

Rich people may take a long time to realize that money can’t buy everything. The bar exam is perhaps the best example of something that simply can’t be bought. Recall that John F. Kennedy failed it five times despite his wealth. I, however, passed it the very first time with hard work, not with wealth. In so doing, I the underdog, the Rocky Balboa, the turtle, indeed, excelled over many a filthy rich hare!

Moreover, riches may also run out. No one is guaranteed to remain rich forever, as the following parable illustrates well:

### **E. The Prodigal Son**

According to Scripture:

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, "Father, give me my share of the estate." So he divided his property between them.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had and, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

When he came to his senses, he said, "How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men." So he got up and went to his father.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." So they began to celebrate.

Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. "Your brother has come," he replied, "and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound."

The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered



his father, “Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!”

“My son”, the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.”<sup>291</sup>

That parable can be summarized as follows:

Wanting to go out into the world on his own, the prodigal son asked for his inheritance ahead of time. Pleasurably, he squandered it. When he had no money left, he was surprised to find that his friends no longer “cared”<sup>292</sup> about him, but rather, abandoned him, and reveled in his misery. Laughing, the world had laughed with him, but crying, he cried alone. Moreover, he also starved.

So, one day, he came to his senses and realized that slaves at his father’s house had it better, so he went home. His father welcomed him, and even killed the fattened calf. His brother, who had been a good son the entire time, protested. Their father explained, however, that regardless, they must rejoice because his (younger and foolish) son, who had lost himself, had found himself and come home willingly.

#### **F. Come Back to Me = All The Way**

One of Frank Sinatra’s best songs is entitled, “All the Way.” It conveys the concept that true love is whole-hearted, not limited or constrained. So, if you have not yet embraced the forgoing conclusion all the way, take your time. It is fine by me. For, I know first hand that most youths hear of others’ suffering and think “it won’t happen to me.” So, go ahead and test that theory. Go ahead and spend all of your riches.

As many philosophers have foretold, either directly or impliedly, the defect of

youth<sup>293</sup> is that their lack of age makes them foolishly believe that they are invincible from pain that comes with adulthood, that they will make \$1 million by age thirty, etc.: “Those who have never had the experience of having to see at the same time that they also longed to transcend all seeing”,<sup>294</sup> may, therefore, not understand. Accordingly, those who have yet to be besieged with great pain, may dismiss not only certain sound concepts such as self-negation, but philosophy and the Idea of God entirely, as nothing they need until they reach old age.

Go, therefore, out into the world and do it your way, become besieged with debt to seem rich, etc., because after you suffer all the consequences of all the “fun” that this world seems to offer, when you came back to God, faith, religion, philosophy, etc., you may do so willingly, not forced or coerced, but rather, with whole heart. That is what Augustine meant when he eventually realized “our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee.”<sup>295</sup>

Come back, therefore, not before the right time. Rather, come back with all your heart, all the way:

***Hosea***  
(Seasonal Missalette)

Selected Verses:

Come back to me with all your heart.  
Don't let fear keep us apart.

Trees do bend, though straight and tall;  
So must we to others' call.

The wilderness will lead you  
To your heart where I will speak.  
Integrity and justice  
With tenderness you shall know.

Refrain:

**Long have I waited for your coming  
home to me  
And living deeply our new life.**

*All The Way*  
(Artist: Frank Sinatra)

When somebody loves you  
Its no good unless he loves you...  
All the way  
Happy to be near you  
When you need someone to cheer you  
All the way

Taller than the tallest tree is  
That's how its got to feel  
Deeper than the deep blue sea is  
That's how deep it goes if its real

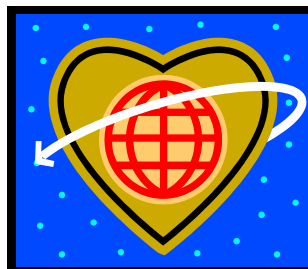
When somebody needs you its no good unless she needs you  
All the way

Through the good or lean years  
And for all the in between years  
Come what may

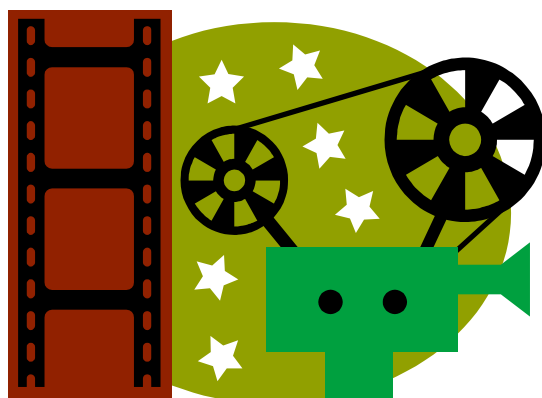
Who knows where the road will lead us  
Only a fool would say  
But if you let me love you  
Its for sure I'm gonna love you  
All the way

All the way...

So if you let me love you  
Its for sure I'm gonna love you  
All the way  
All ... The ... Way.....



**Chapter VIII:**  
**Philosophy of Film:**  
**Virtue and Vice**



## A. Introduction

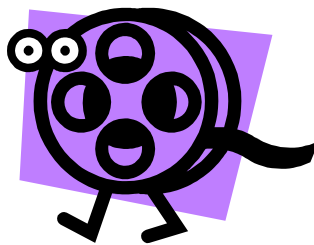
Just as Jesus taught in parables, movies can be used to instruct philosophy. They demonstrate both good choices and bad, virtue and vice. Accordingly, those that I would use to instruct philosophy shall now be featured herein.

In relation to the theme of this dissertation, they shall be bifurcated into two sets, namely, those that include: 1) movie action heroes which manifest my **entire** aforementioned conclusion of courageous Hegelian self-negation and peaceful Augustinian return to the Idea of God; and 2) **specific** scenes that demonstrate certain virtues or vices.

So, sit on the edge of your seat  
For our feature films are about to begin  
That will take you outside yourself and back again...

## B. Movie Action Heroes As Role Models

Far better than boring written prose (i.e., books) or still pictures, movies best depict the Hegelian and Augustinian theme hereof because that medium is active *per se*.



So, too, are the heroes therein who do not merely sit back and passively think however freely open<sup>296</sup>, rather, they face their fears and actually **do** something about it!



Of all movie action heroes, I believe the best of the best are: 1) Neo in the *Matrix*<sup>297</sup>, (first movie of the trilogy); 2) Dr. Indiana Jones in *Indiana Jones, The Last Crusade*<sup>298</sup> (last movie of the trilogy); and 3) Cameron Poe in *Con Air*.<sup>299</sup> Each will be taken in turn.

..... Lights ..... Camera ..... Action!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

## 1. Neo



### a. Introduction

The first movie in the *Matrix* trilogy was certainly the most philosophical film that I have ever seen. Not only does it demonstrate my Hegelian/Augustinian theme in total and complete “slam dunk” or “game over” fashion, as they say, but it touches on more philosophical concepts perhaps than any other movie ever made.<sup>300</sup> Thus, it is the

best of the best from both a qualitative and a quantitative standpoint. However, since Neo the hero became the Messiah in the last movie, the entire trilogy has lost its fame. I shall, therefore, concentrate mostly on the first movie. Yet, even such lost fame and tarnished halo<sup>301</sup> perfectly befits my Hegelian/Augustinian theme of self-negation, because such misfortune magnifies the consequences of egotistically attempting to become God.

Let us thus turn focus to the first movie, and more specifically, to the selfless hero, Neo, therein.

### **b. Most Inspirational**

Neo was perhaps the most inspirational movie action hero in relation to my theme because physically, he resembled a little David, not a Goliath. The strength of his inner spirit, however, paralleled no other. Meek and humble, he could not believe the prophesy that he was the “One”, the only one, who could save humankind. I, for one, will never forget the doe-like could-it-possibly-be-me look in his eyes.

Thus, Neo was, in my opinion, the most inspirational hero I have ever seen exactly because he was the last person you’d ever expect to be one. He seemed to be the last person you’d want to pick for your team in gym class, but when the going got tough, he prevailed in the end. This perfectly demonstrates the very heart, gravamen or cornerstone of my theme of selflessness, namely, that humility, albeit perhaps unexpectedly, supersedes egocentrism.

Moreover, Neo may very well have inspired more people than any other movie hero. This is because many people could identify with him. For, in reality, Goliaths are few, whereas Davids are many. Thus, it is of no moment that the first film was such a box-office smash!

Selflessly endearing, we felt for him, we bonded with him, we fell in love when he did, and most importantly, we got goose bumps as we sat on the edge of our seats, cheering him on silently, when he eventually saved the day in grand style. We triumphed when he triumphed, and we went back for more. I still get goose bumps just thinking about it. For, indeed, something sweet and innocent happens when such an unseemingly hero prevails, namely, a door briefly opens (on a wing and a prayer) that takes us higher and higher until we transcend this world and its suffering, and touch the Idea of God, fulfill our lack, and find peace.

Neo was, indeed, the “One” that did that for us. Notice that such a prophecy rang true on another level, namely, for us outside the film, too. Thus, he not only saved all of humankind in the movie, but also inspired all of humankind thinking outside that “box.”

### c. A Prison for Your Mind

“Boxes” can both contain things benignly, or execute cruel slavery. The latter is why this theme underscores the extreme importance of thinking outside all sorts of boxes, regardless how seemingly beautiful on the outside.

The first *Matrix* movie contained such an evil box. Far worse, however, than physical shackles or fetters, its evil was hidden even from within, latent and lethal. For, in that movie machines that humankind itself had created for itself eventually became so evil and powerful that they physically and mentally enslaved humankind in order to use people as power cells. Specifically, their bodies were physically invaded and hooked up to wires connected to the machines.

That movie, therefore, “shocked the conscience”<sup>302</sup> of many a movie-goer. Not since the original *Planet of the Apes*<sup>303</sup> movie did people watch in horror, but not just any type of horror. Rather, they felt the most extreme type of horror of all because they



realized that the villain was not one single madman whom they could scapegoat or blame, but all of themselves, *per se*. Indeed, it was like looking into a mirror and watching in horror as your own reflection reveals itself as pure evil. Thus, it was quite a philosophical “WAKE UP”<sup>304</sup> call!

This quite befits this theme which has shown the evils that in reality humankind has unleashed at its very own hand by becoming egocentric and by declaring the death of the Idea of God, having, obviously, no one else to blame but itself.

Moreover, the worst part about the slavery in that movie was that the victims were unaware. The machines succeeded in creating a virtual reality, a hollowgram, an empty inauthentic appearance, whereby people actually thought they were simply going about their lives as usual. In so doing, the machines accomplished and imposed slavery most cruel, i.e., slavery of the mind. That could have marked the end of philosophy in that film, indeed, the one and only absolutely complete “prison for your mind”.

However, as per the theme of this dissertation, neither philosophy, nor the Idea of God will ever really perish, nor will humankind, in turn, because both will suddenly swoop in and save the day in the end.

In that movie, philosophy was able to save the day in the end because it actively belied all the evil. It was there, ever-ready to be used the entire time. Specifically, despite such total “mind-control”<sup>305</sup>, which posited seemingly comfortable bliss, the people therein had an eerie feeling that something wasn’t right. Most made the wrong choice, namely, to do nothing about it. Manifesting the message of Plato’s cave metaphor,<sup>306</sup> however, Neo made the right choice, faced his fears suffered through the uncomfortable reality, secured his own freedom, and then venerably returned to emancipate others.

#### **d. Plato's Cave**

Plato's cave metaphor encompasses both physical and mental slavery. It, too, was a prison whereby people had been fettered two-fold since childhood, both by their legs and by their necks. As a result, they lived their entire lives inside a cave where they sat in front of a fire. They could not, however, actually see the fire behind them. Since they were shackled by the neck, neither could they turn around and see people who passed in front of the fire (but still did so behind them) carrying various objects such as vases. All they could see was the unreal shadow images of such real objects that the fire projected upon a wall situated in front of them. Thus, they thought that the shadows, the inauthentic appearances, were actually real.

One day, however, one slave was released. At first, it was hard for him to stand after sitting for so long. As he exited the cave, it was also hard for his eyes to adjust from the cave darkness to the outside sunlight. Eventually, he gained true education as to what was and was not actually real, and returned to the cave with the intent of liberating others. He soon found out, however, that the others did not want to leave, to know, to learn, etc. This was because they had personally witnessed his struggle to stand and to see, so they opted instead to laugh at him and to remain in darkness.

I shall now cite Plato's text so that you can compare his highly instructional words to my humble summary:

"Next, then," I said, "take the following parable of education and ignorance as a picture of the condition of our nature. Imagine mankind as dwelling in an underground cave with a long entrance open to the light across the whole width of the cave: in this they have to stay where they are. They cannot move their heads round because of the fetters, and they can only look forward, but light comes to them from fire burning behind them higher up at a distance. Between the fire and the prisoners is a road above their

level, and along it imagine a low wall has been built, as puppet showmen have screens in front of their people over which they work their puppets.”

“I see,” he said.

“See, then, bearers carrying along this wall all sorts of articles which they hold projecting above the wall, statutes of men and other living things, made of stone or wood and all kinds of stuff, some of the bearers speaking and some silent, as you might expect.”

“What a remarkable image,” he said, “and what remarkable prisoners!”

“Just like ourselves,” I said. “For, first of all, tell me this: What do you think such people would have seen of themselves and each other except their shadows, which the fire cast on the opposite wall of the cave?”

“I don’t see how they could see anything else,” said he, “if they were compelled to keep their heads unmoving all their lives!”

“Very well, what of the things being carried along? Would not this be the same?”

“Of course it would.”

“Suppose the prisoners were able to talk together, don’t you think that when they named the shadows which they saw passing they would believe they were naming things?”

“Necessarily.”

“Then if their prison has an echo from the opposite wall, whenever one of the passing bearers uttered a sound, would they not suppose that the passing shadow must be making the sound? Don’t you think so?”

“Indeed I do,” he said.

“If so,” said I, “such persons would certainly believe that there were no realities except those shadows of handmade things.”

“So it must be,” said he.

“Now consider,” said I, “what their release would be like, and their cure from these fetters and their folly; let us imagine whether it might naturally be something like this. One might be released, and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck around, and to walk and look towards the firelight; all this would hurt him, and he would be too much dazzled to see distinctly those things whose shadows he had seen before. What do you think he would say, if someone told him that what he saw before was foolery, but now he saw more rightly, being a bit nearer reality and turned towards what was a little more real? What if he were shown each of the passing things, and compelled by questions to answer what each one was? Don’t you think he would be puzzled, and believe what he saw before was more true than what was shown to him now?”

“Far more,” said he.

“Then suppose he were compelled to look towards the real light, it would hurt his eyes, and he would escape by turning them away to the things which he was able to look at, and these he would believe to be clearer than what was being shown to him.”

“Just so,” said he.

“Suppose, now,” said I, “that someone should drag him thence by force, up to the rough ascent, the steep way up, and never stop until he could drag him out into the light of the sun, would he not be distressed and furious at being dragged; and when he came into the light, the brilliance would fill his eyes and he would not be able to see even one of the things now called real?”

“That he would not,” said he, “all of a sudden.”

“He would have to get used to it, surely, I think, if he is to see the things above. First he would most easily look at shadows, after that images of mankind and the rest in water, lastly the things themselves. After this he would find it easier to survey by night the heavens themselves and all that is in them, gazing at the light of the stars and moon, rather than by day the sun and the sun’s light.”

“Of course.”

“Last of all, I suppose, the sun; he could look on the sun

itself by itself in its own place, and see what it is like, not reflections of it in water or as it appears in some alien setting.”

“Necessarily,” said he.

“And only after all this he might reason about it, how this is he who provides seasons and years, and is set over all there is in the visible region, and he is in a manner the cause of all things which they saw.”

“Yes, this is clear,” said he, “that after all that, he would come to this last.”

“Very good. Let him be reminded of his habitation, and what was wisdom in that place, and of his fellow-prisoners there; don’t you think he would bless himself for the change, and pity them?”

“Yes, indeed.”

“And if there were honours and praises among them and prizes for the one who saw the passing things most sharply and remembered best which of them used to come before and which after and which together, and from these was best able to prophesy accordingly what was going to come – do you believe he would set his desire on that, and envy those who were honoured men or potentates among them? Would he not feel as Homer says, and heartily desire rather to be serf of some landless man on earth and to endure anything in the world, rather than to opine as they did and to live in that way?”

“Yes, indeed,” said he, “he would rather accept anything than live like that.”

“Then again,” I said, “just consider; if such a one should go down again and sit on his old seat, would he not get his eyes full of darkness coming in suddenly out of the sun?”

“Very much so,” said he.

“And is he should have to compete with those who had been always prisoners, by laying down the law about those shadows while he was blinking before his eyes were settled down – and it would take a good long time to get used to things – wouldn’t they all laugh at him and say he had

spoiled his eyesight by going up there, and it was not worth-while so much as to try to go up? And would they not kill anyone who tried to release them and take them up, if they could somehow lay hands on him and kill him?"

"That they would!" said he.

"Then we must apply this image, my dear Glaucon," said I, "to all we have been saying. The world of our sight is like the habitation in prison, the firelight there to the sunlight here, the ascent and the view of the upper world is the rising of the soul into the world of mind; put it so and you will not be far from my own surmise, since that is what appears to me is, that in the world of the known, last of all, is the idea of the good, and with what toil to be seen! And seen, this must be inferred to be the cause of all right and beautiful things for all, which gives birth to light and the king of light in the world of sight, and, in the world of mind, herself the queen produces truth and reason; and she must be seen by one who is to **act** with reason publicly or privately."<sup>307</sup>

Notice that this passage ends not by suggesting passive thought, but by advocating creative action!

One particular scene in the first *Matrix* movie parallels Plato's cave metaphor very closely. Therein, another character, Morpheus, presents Neo (who was by that time quite curious and uncertain about reality) with two pills, one red, one blue. Morpheus explained that one would relieve Neo's eerie feeling of curiosity and allow him to regain his apparent bliss, whereas the other would reveal the painful truth. Neo not only made the right choice, but made it once again when he went back to save others. Both choices were hard, but the rewards were worth it, for he also fell in love.

#### e. **Love Conquers All**

In the first movie, Neo also fell in love, but not just any love. So did "Trinity", the female human object of his affection. In fact, she fell in love with him first. Fortunately for him, she told him so while he laid dying. As a result, it gave him the will

to live, and moreover, inspired him to get back in the “game”, because by then evil agents of the machines were winning the virtual war. So, he came back to life right in the nick of time, and to suddenly find with incredible awe and wonder, that bullets could no longer hurt him. Thus, love truly made him invincible, in more ways than one.

That is why I show that particular scene when I am teaching Plato’s Symposium.<sup>308</sup> It is the best example of the first speech therein which praised love as all powerful, in all its awesome wonder and glory, with no holds barred. That speech explained how love could change a person, honoring and praising love not lightly, but “all the way.”<sup>309</sup>

Afterward, in class, we then go on to discuss the other speeches, which unlike the first, admit that thorns adorn even such total and complete love. This is important because it is better to know and face the downsides of not just love, but everything else in this world, instead of selecting seeming bliss. Hurt, pain, etc., hits us all the more when we are not prepared, thus, it is better to, as Socrates said, “Know Thyself.”

#### **f. The Oracle**

Knowing thyself, namely, oneself, means knowing that you will never know everything. Socrates knew that, which is why the Oracle at Delphi prophesized that he was the wisest of all men.<sup>310</sup>

When he heard that prophesy, however, Socrates refused to believe it. Rather, he set out to test it. Socrates refused to become egocentric, egotistical or egological. He remained selfless, instead, and even when he was put to death not for a crime, but for trying to teach humankind, and indeed, save it from itself. This is because in his very own and very real Plato’s cave circumstances, the people did not merely passively choose to laugh and remain in seemingly comfortable bliss. Rather, they actively caused him the

most extreme physical pain of all, death. He, however, was spiritually above the hemlock. Instead of running from death, he faced it, and perhaps even embraced it. Thus, in his mind death had no effect, similar to the scene in the first *Matrix* movie wherein bullets suddenly had no effect on Neo. This is because both of them found a way to transcend.

Neo, in fact, also consulted an Oracle in that movie. In keeping with my theme, he found her in the most unexpected place. Not surprisingly, however, a sign hanging above her door on the inside read, “Know Thyself.” Unfortunately, however, Neo heeded both the oracle and that sign in similar fashion to Socrates only in the first movie. By the second, he selfishly chose his love for one person (Trinity) over saving all of humankind. Most heroes selflessly choose the opposite, but then get both as their just reward, but not he. Moviegoers realized that such was done for a pecuniary reason, namely, as an excuse to make a third movie. Thus, by then, Neo had lost his halo.

Far worse, in the last movie of the trilogy (which I have yet to bring myself to see), I have heard that he became the Messiah. That, and other things tarnished his halo completely. I can, therefore, barely express how much I personally regret his fall from grace. As a result, I am now quite leery about showing parts even of the first film in class. Yet, his fall from grace befits the core Hegelian/Augustinian theme of this dissertation. For, as I have averred, it is exactly when we turn from selflessness and the Idea of God to egocentric unfettered freedom that we unwittingly do nothing but enslave ourselves, and like the people who created the machines in that movie in the first place, open Pandora’s box, and unleash evil onto ourselves and the rest of humankind by our very **own** hands.

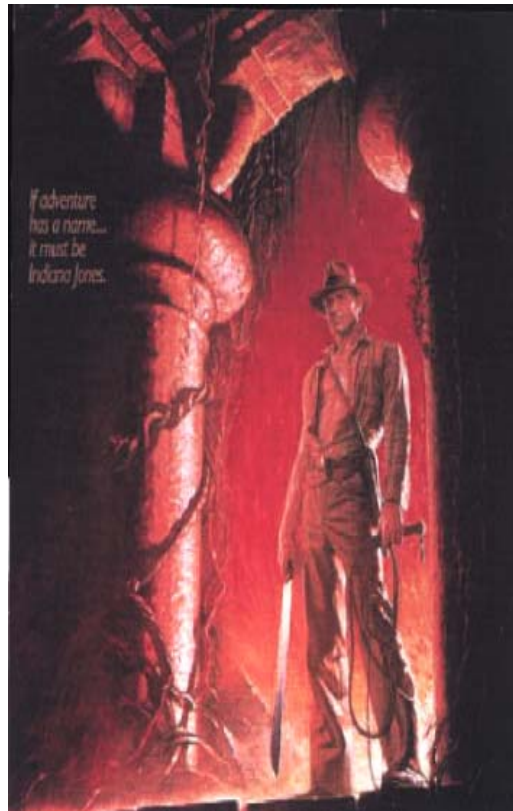
Having discussed some of the best and worst philosophical facets of Neo, now let



us turn to another good role model, Dr. Indiana Jones.

## 2. Indiana Jones

In comparison to Neo, Indiana Jones was more physically formidable, wielding a whip, etc.



The strength of his faith in God, however, was even more impressive. For, instead of leaping into a Heideggerean existential “*Abgrund*” or abyss where mortals already find themselves,<sup>311</sup> in the last movie of the trilogy, *The Last Crusade*,<sup>312</sup> he had the courage to step off a mountain, while chanting “the penitent man shall pass.” Instead of falling into the canyon to his death, a firm crossing suddenly appeared, created of course, by his faith. Most importantly, the reason that he attempted it in the first place was not for himself, but to get an antidote for his dying father. Thus, unlike Neo (and although, as Dr. Hotep commented, he may have been nothing more than a common thief

romanticized by Hollywood filmmakers in other scenes), in those particular scenes, he was a good example of a selfless action hero.

### 3. Cameron Poe

Poe, on the other hand, is the best example of reasonable restraint and moderation.



For, at one point in the *Con Air*<sup>313</sup> movie, an undercover agent got a hold of a gun, and foolishly attempted to take over a plane filled with convicted felons. Acting perhaps out of character for a movie action hero, Poe reasoned that they were severely outnumbered, and talked him out of it. Thus, instead of being excessively foolish or rash, he waited for a more advantageous situation until the time was right. Later on, he, of course, saved the day in grand and impressive style. In so doing, in my opinion, he was even better than the other heroes, for he exhibited the mental moderation that we real people should use in **real** life.

Notice also that he bears quite a remarkable resemblance to Jesus Christ, the absolute best example of all.

### C. Specific Virtues and Vices

Certain scenes in various movies exemplify specific virtues and vices. A discussion of those that I typically show during class for teaching purposes follow.

## 1. Excessive Force

Many people believe that excessive force is justifiable in self defense. Certain western states such as Colorado do have “Make My Day” laws to that effect.

Pennsylvania, however, does not. So, to explain why, I usually show the scene in *Indiana Jones, The Last Crusade*,<sup>314</sup> where Indy takes out a gun and shoots a man wielding quite a large knife. Although it is admittedly humorous, it depicts what you should **not** do in reality. Another scene in *Con Air*<sup>315</sup> where Poe is sent to prison even though he did not start a fight, is also instructive. I also show the very last scene of the *Specialist*,<sup>316</sup> wherein May Monroe gets her revenge. I explain that although it may seem sweet in the theater, revenge does not pay in reality because it knows no end. Instead, I suggest defending oneself with words or thoughts that do not cause physical harm, which is best demonstrated by the scene in the first *Home Alone*<sup>317</sup> movie, where actor Macauley Culkin, who was a very small child at that time, successfully avoided harm by creatively tricking robbers into thinking that he was not, in fact, home **alone**.

## 2. Love

When teaching Plato’s Symposium, in addition to the aforementioned scene in the first *Matrix* movie, I also show the well-known one in the *Lady and the Tramp*<sup>318</sup> movie (when the two dogs share their spaghetti while being romantically serenaded by the Italian chefs) to demonstrate one of the main points of the doctor’s speech, that love is not just between humans, it is universal.<sup>319</sup>

However, in order to explain the most unfortunate truth about love, that it is a condition not of joy or pleasure, but of fundamental lack, I show the scene in *City of Angels*<sup>320</sup> when former-angel, but by then human, Seth, realizes that his human love, Maggie, has died. His friend asks him whether he took the plunge from eternal life for

nothing. He replies that it was worth losing his wings, but despite his contrary words, his pain is readily evident.

### 3. Faith and Hope

Speaking of angels, I also show the scene, albeit somewhat humorous, in *Angels in the Outfield*<sup>321</sup> when all the fans start flapping their arms in order to make angels appear and help them win the baseball game. Because he believed the angels would, one older player found the strength and courage to win the game without the angels, both for himself and for others. Thus, despite the humor, that point is very touching and sound on a substantive level because it demonstrates the **power** of faith and hope.

### 4. Stealth

*Air Force One*<sup>322</sup> is also instructive, not to mention inspirational, after the terrorism suffered by America on September 11, 2001. It, however, differs from the other action hero movies discussed thus far because actor Harrison Ford's presidential character prevailed mainly by fighting while hidden. Thus, it demonstrates that a hero may be all the more formidable if unseen. That parallels one of the points hereof, which suggests that faith in the Idea of God may be all the more stronger if hidden from those who would hurt us.

### 5. Questioning

Certainly, the heart and soul of philosophy is the thoughtful activity of questioning, of wanting to know more. To demonstrate how important that can be, and to dispel fear of the Socratic method, I show the scene in the *Sound of Music*<sup>323</sup> where Barron Von Trapp asks Maria why she returned to his estate. Hoping that it was because she was in love with him, he asks many leading questions until the truth is revealed.

## 6. Inspiration

Dr. Jackson was quite inspirational in the *Stargate*<sup>324</sup> movie because he was a very humble, selfless person, indeed, the last scholar ever expected to be able to decipher certain ancient hieroglyphics. Other formidable experts failed, but he “did it”. Notice how well this equates to the theme of this dissertation.

## 7. Virtue and Vice

The most recent *Gladiator*<sup>325</sup> movie starring Russell Crowe exemplified both virtue and vice. To demonstrate that virtues, as per Aristotle, are moderate means between vices,<sup>326</sup> I show the scene where the king lists various virtues and explains to his son that a ruler should have all of them. Since his son had none, he did not name him as his successor. Upon hearing that, his son proved his father exactly right by suffocating him. Thus, that surprising scene demonstrates both virtue and vice.

## 8. Hegelian Duel to the Death

*Fight Club*<sup>327</sup> is a favorite, indeed, because of actor Brad Pitt. Substantively, however, it is one of the best examples of this dissertation’s theme of self-negation. The very last scene when the mousy office worker realizes that Brad Pitt’s formidable character is his alter ego, he shoots that evil alter ego, and lives. That, therefore, is quite a poignant example of Hegel’s explanation whereby good prevails over evil during a lethal duel to the death after recognizing that the evil other is not really other, but one’s own selfish self.<sup>328</sup>

Most importantly, however, unlike many other films which feature surreal or virtual situations that could never happen in real life, this film is unique because it features a very **real** problem that many people face every day. Many hate their jobs/careers, so they try to find something to make their lives outside of work better.

Instead of choosing higher pleasures<sup>329</sup>, however, they often select lower ones which could endanger not only their jobs, but their entire lives, not to mention others'. Thus, that film demonstrates the consequences that can result when we allow our egocentric selves to run wild, and why, in comparison, self-negation and moderation is requisite in **real** life.

**D. Caution: Make Your Own Active Movie!**

Please do not, however, watch these movies passively, or merely mimic the heroes, for “It is not difficult to be misled by what has been and will be filmed.”<sup>330</sup> Rather, create your own active style, for “Many are the wondrous films of this world but none is more wondrous than the movie **we** have not yet made.”<sup>331</sup>



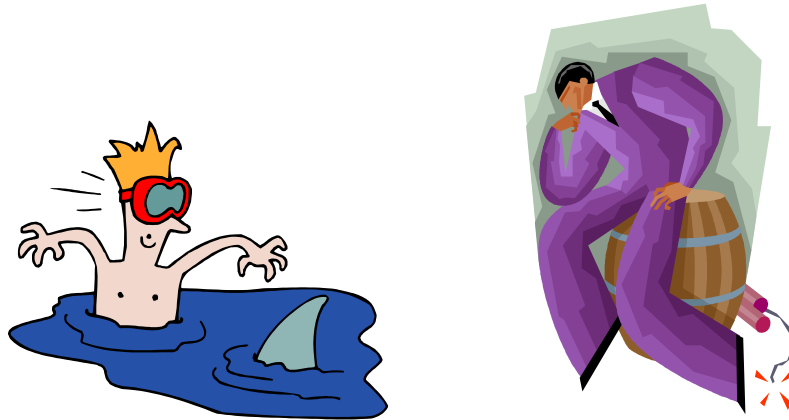
## **Chapter IX:**

### **Surprise Conclusion: Moderate Critique**



## A. Introduction

In a word, philosophy is “dangerous.”<sup>332</sup>



Ecologically, it opened the door, quite like Pandora’s box, that lead to all sorts of evil, including its own despair within academia, and death outside, indeed, buy its very own hand. Accordingly, thus far, this dissertation has advocated philosophy’s own deconstructive self-negation, and its selfless return to the Idea of God.

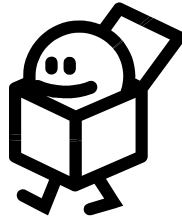
That, however, is not the whole story. I must now turn the tables on my very own seeming conclusion, and deconstruct it, as well.



After all, I must actively practice what I preach, and lead by example. For, philosophy, although dangerous, far exceeds the Idea of God on earth exactly by and because of that very danger. The Idea of God is thus subordinate to philosophy to the



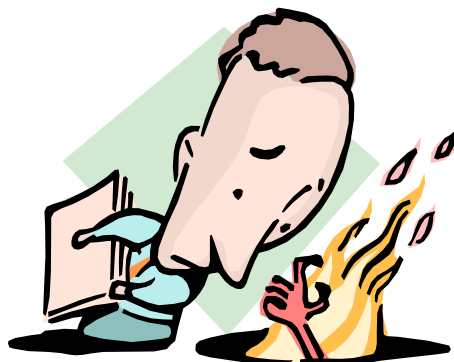
extent that it cannot cure its own abuses, whereas philosophy can do just that, and more. Thus, another box within this box must now be opened, out of which shall come another source of hope, namely philosophy, *per se*.



Philosophy, therefore, is humankind's true hope...

### **B. Fatal Attraction: Creative Elevation**

Personally, I must admit that psychologically and subconsciously, I may have opted to study philosophy, at least in part, exactly because it is not what society expects students to do. It is considered the equivalent of basket-weaving!!! For, as aforementioned, it can't help you out in the world to attain wealth, ambition, the appearance thereof, etc. (*see* herein Chapter IV, section D). Instead, one is expected to study a subject that enables one to make a lot of money. To that extent, I may have acted radically and excessively, which seemingly flies in the face of the moderation advocated herein. The point that I would like to convey, and hopefully inspire you with, however, is the fact that philosophy is also, in a word, "fun"!!! Moreover, it is fun exactly because it is a bit devilish.



For, it comes to me most when I am doing something boring, and greatly so, because it provides an elevating escape. Specifically, my most creative artistic moments come therefrom.

Most importantly, I'd like to take you there, for philosophy is, in fact, a ticket to anywhere."<sup>333</sup> Some say philosophy should be done on a cruise in a tropical paradise such as Key West.<sup>334</sup>



Others say that while rice makes for Buddhism, “German metaphysics is the result of beer.”<sup>335</sup> I, however, think it is not the result, but the cause of intoxication, a different kind of flying that allows one to transcend, a superhero type of thinking indeed, that shows you how to break the bonds of your own self-imposed slavery.



Thus, if we could only tap into it at will, we could “work like you don’t need money, love like you’ve never been hurt, and dance like no one is watching.”<sup>336</sup>

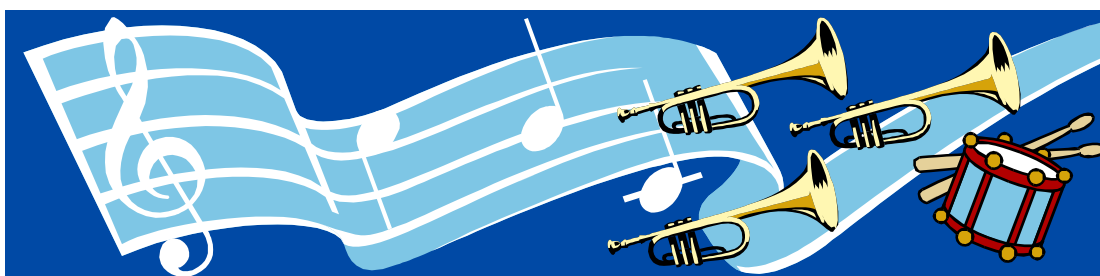


It is, however, a bit dangerous, both frustrating and liberating, an uncatchable sprite that comes and goes as it pleases, remaining, sometimes, only for a moment:

--Ca vient de partir.	--It's just gone.
--Ca revient de partir.	--It's coming round again.
--Ca vient de repartir.	--It's just gone again. <sup>337</sup>



Moreover, I think that similar to Heidegger's concept of Being, it confers upon existence a "mobile rhythm" of endless possibilities, making human life an "everlasting musical composition that never comes to rest on a single note."<sup>338</sup>



Are not the musical lyrics herein, therefore, also in light of Nietzsche's persistent praise of music in The Birth of Tragedy, very appropriate, coming and going when you least expect them?

### C.     **Respect**

What you probably expected the very least of all was my sudden turn, i.e., return, to the respect we must all have for philosophy. For, as explained herein in many instances, humans can be exploited in many ways, the most unexpected and evil of which is under the seemingly benign auspices of the Idea of God.

Specifically, priests and rulers have used it to drug other people into complacency. Yet, people have also used it themselves to drown their sorrows into an excuse for lazy omission.

Like a fearless hero, however, philosophy will always rescue humankind. Moreover, to the extent to which it can prevent such abuse, it supercedes the Idea of God on earth. This it does through its dangerous power of critique. The problem is, that its power of critique can be abused by selfish people who excessively seek not benevolent critique for themselves and for others, but rather to abuse such power to become gods themselves, for themselves alone.

Nietzsche, in fact, never said that the “*Übermensch*” (German for “overman” or “superman”) should overpower others. Rather, he meant we should overcome others’ abuse of us in order to achieve all of our own possibilities. He never said, however, that in so doing, we should rape, rampage, pillage, annihilate, or subjugate others.

Admittedly, the pursuit of one’s own possibilities may cut off those of others indirectly. That, however, was never expressly stated or even addressed by Nietzsche. Rather, others simply read it in at will.

Thus, philosophy must also correct misunderstandings such as these, which may, in fact, arise out of itself, also.

**D. Disclaimer**

Thus, to practice what I preach, I hereby impart the following disclaimer regarding this very work:

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**WARNING: THIS TEXT MUST NOT BE TAKEN OUT OF ITS TOTAL CONTEXT. RATHER, ALL PARTS MUST BE READ TOGETHER TO DISCERN AN OVERALL THEME. OTHERWISE, IT COULD EASILY BE ABUSED BY THOSE WHO WOULD USURP PHILOSOPHY'S UNIQUE POWER OF CRITIQUE. SPECIFICALLY, PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISSERTATION WAS NOT TO DECLARE THE DEATH OF PHILOSOPHY, *PER SE*. RATHER, IT HAS ONLY DECLARED THE DEATH OF PHILOSOPHY'S EGOCENTRIC OR EGOLOGICAL SELF, AND TO THE CONTRARY, HAS CALLED FOR ITS CONTINUED RESPECT, NOW AND EVERMORE.**

**FOR, PHILOSOPHY'S POWER OF CRITIQUE IS, IN FACT, HUMANKIND'S TRUE HOPE ON EARTH!!!**

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### **E. Moderation**

Philosophy's new task, therefore, is to restrain its dangerous and somewhat devilish power of critique. The key, therefore, in a word, is "moderation."



### **F. Applying Philosophy Today**

Today, Philosophy is perhaps even more meaningful and necessary than ever before, for reasons that include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **1. Avoiding Debt-Capitalism**

Once one learns from Philosophy about humankind's fundamental lack, one can free oneself from the endless pursuit of ephemeral, temporal things that may be pleasurable for a while, but may leave one lacking all the more, and enslave one by causing increased addiction thereto. Instead, Philosophy teaches one to seek higher things that may, indeed, not be as pleasurable but certainly will not cause as much pain when they end (such as education, music, etc.), and, in fact, have their own reward.

#### **2. Freedom From Too Much Freedom**

Philosophy can also free us from the slavery that results from too much freedom. Many a child, for instance, longs to grow up so that they can lead their own lives, only to find that with freedom comes responsibility, no matter how hard they may try to run from it. Philosophy helps one realize that nothing is perfect, so if one tries to run from imperfection, pain, etc., one will never achieve anything.

This is how, for example, I counsel students who can't decide on a career or a major. I advise them to pick one and stick with it because no other will be a rose devoid of thorns. I explain that if they keep running, they will never finish anything. If so, their lives will never have any Meaning. Rather, they will loose and enslave themselves in such "freedom" evermore.

### **3. Terrible Atrocities**

Philosophy can also help us understand why terrible things happen to good people. When I was young, I couldn't fathom why God would not prevent people from being poor, cold, sick, alone, etc. Luckily for me, I found the answer in the Philosophy of St. Augustine.

As aforementioned herein, St. Augustine basically explained that God neither causes, nor steps in to prevent, evil from happening.<sup>339</sup> Nor is evil a personified devil with a pitchfork. Rather, evil results from the free choice of the will. Such free will is a gift from God, it is what makes us human, i.e., higher than plants and animals.<sup>340</sup> When we make a bad choice, evil results. God does not step in, otherwise, we would not be truly free. So, the best way to avoid most evil is by making good choices.<sup>341</sup>

Even that, however, does not explain why bad things happen to good people regardless. Fortunately, Augustine provided the answer to that, too. The reason is that we only have a limited perspective, so we can only see the present. If we had God's unlimited perspective, we could see that even the worst events, such as those that resulted from the terrorism that took place on September 11, 2001, have meaning because of the good things they will eventually cause in the future. For instance, although many innocent people died, etc., as a result of that particular tragedy, notice how many people have refound their faith, suddenly appreciated their families, friends, etc., which they



used to run away from, may have taken for granted, etc., because of it.

I have also seen this happen in my very own life many times after I was not, for example, selected for a job. I remember one particular instance very well. I really wanted one particular job for many reasons, including close proximity to my home. However, very soon thereafter, a Pennsylvania Supreme Court case held that type of entity unable to charge legal fees. So, I suddenly became very grateful that I was not selected before because that holding caused disgrace to that entity, and persons related thereto. People then treated it as a greedy business that tried to charge legal fees that it did not deserve. So, had I worked there, it would have been not an asset, but a liability, on my resume.

Thus, similar to the idea that when St. Peter closes the gates to heaven, St. Mary opens a window, such seemingly terrible events may actually result in much better things by setting us on a different path than the one we might have chosen.<sup>342</sup> We may, in fact, be grateful for them in the future once we are able to view them in a broader perspective, i.e., until a later time when we can finally see such a window being opened.

#### **4. Preventing Abuse**

Philosophy is all the more necessary today because it can also aid us in avoiding abuse. This is because people constantly find new ways to abuse others. Some, in fact, are not only very clever, but have no ethical qualms about perpetrating it under the guise of something good or sacred.

Consider, for example, how many people have pretended to be victims of the flooding that occurred in Pittsburgh during September 2004, as a result of hurricane Ivan. Pretending to need help, and by abusing the sympathy we have for true victims, some people have successfully duped others into giving them donations. Far worse, some have

pretended to need shelter, but actually had the criminal intent to gain access to someone else's home to do nothing but commit veiled theft and robbery. Accordingly, Philosophy can help you distance yourself even from Heidegger's "care"<sup>343</sup> concept, pursuant to which you could easily be abused.

## **5. Business / Profit**

Believe it or not, Philosophy can even assist you in succeeding in business, and to make large profits! This is because the aspect of Philosophy which constantly questions can help you think outside the box and create a new product, service, etc.

Take, for example, the idea of a personal pan pizza. Prior to that, the working lunch crowd had to settle for slices of pre-existing large pizzas which may or may not have had their desired toppings. That new concept not only let them choose their own, but provided them with a psychological feeling of power or closure, because no one else could have it, and they received not a mere part, but a whole pizza. As a result, Pizza Hut profited greatly. Thus, **many** businesses have promoted the idea of thinking outside the box in order to challenge their employees to come up with new profitable ideas.

Accordingly, Philosophy can profit business persons who seek it out in more ways than one.<sup>344</sup>

## **6. Logical Rigor**

In stark contrast to the slavery that results from too much freedom, the logical rigor of certain Philosophers can help you succeed today, even as a lawyer! Take, for instance, the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. It is perhaps the most rigorous of all, for it not only presents arguments and counter arguments, but it parses specific objections and provides particular responses thereto. Out in the real world today, lawyers cannot always prevail by making general arguments. At times, they must make very specific

logical averments, objections, etc., and refute those of their opponents. Thus, Aquinas' Philosophy can not only prepare you, but show you how its done.

**a. Aquinas' Method**

Since the now-antiquated words he used back in the Middle Ages can be quite confusing, I rewrote his Treatise on Law<sup>345</sup> by using more modern language. Notice that I did not, however, revise the logical rigor which will serve us well in this world today:

**QUESTION 90: THE NATURE OF THE LAW**

**Article 1: Is law a function of the mind?**

Objection 1: It seems not because St. Paul said; "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." Thought is not exercised through physical organs/members, so law is not a function of reason.

Objection 2: Reason involves a faculty, disposition, or activity. Law is none of these, for instance, it would lapse when reasoning is suspended like during sleep.

Objection 3: Law motions people to act rightly, yet that which sets human activity in motion is the will, so law is the office of the will, not the mind.

**On the contrary**, the burden of the law is to prescribe or prohibit, and such executive commands must issue from reason, so law is a function of reason.

**I answer that**: The focus of law is action, either telling us what to do, or what not to do. The Latin word "ligando" comes from "ligo", which means to bind. Similarly, it is a function of reason to plan for an end, so law belongs to reason.

Reply to Objection 1: Taken as a rule and measure, law can be present in two manners:

1) proper to reason, a ruling and measuring principle, reason alone, and 2) in the subject being measured, which is more like a tendency, inclination, or law of members.

Reply to Objection 2: With outward acts, there is a difference between the doing and the deed, between actual activities of reason as compared with reasoning itself. Practical reason makes use of some sort of syllogism, theory versus practice. So, what has to be done is always there, even if actual actions/practice is suspended.

Reply to Objection 3: Reason gets its motive from the force of the will, because it is a person that wills an end that governs how to bring it about. To have the quality of law, the will must be ruled by some reason, or else it would be lawless.

**Article 2: Is law always ordained to the common good?**

Objection 1: It seems that the law is not always shaped by the common good. Its job is to proscribe and prohibit, which is for the good of individuals, not the common good.

Objection 2: The law directs man's actions, which are particular, so it is for particular benefit.

Objection 3: The law is founded on reason, which covers both individual and common good, so the law applies to both.

**On the contrary,** the law is not enacted for private benefit, but for the common service of citizens, per Isidore.

**I answer that:** The nature of the law is to be a principle of human acts, a rule and a measure. Their beginning lies in reason. The law comes in once the activity starts. Happiness is the end of all things, so the law is engaged above all to attain happiness. One man is part of the happiness of the whole community, so subordination of the individual to some extent is necessary for the common good. Aristotle said in the Ethics that acts are just if they produce happiness for the community, i.e. politics. So, every law is shaped to the common good.

Reply to Objection 1: The law applies to particular cases, which taken together, amount

to the common good.

Reply to Objection 2: Human activities must always take place in particular situations, but are relevant to the common good.

Reply to Objection 3: Reason's ultimate end is the common good, so whatever stands to reason has an essential quality of law.

### **Article 3: Can anybody legislate?**

Objection 1: It seems yes, because St. Paul said that Gentiles who have no law are a law unto themselves, meaning everyone without exception. So, anyone can make a law for himself.

Objection 2: Aristotle said that a lawmaker's wish is to lead men into virtue, which anyone can do.

Objection 3: Like a sovereign legislates for a state, any man can do so for his family/household.

**On the contrary,** Isidore says the law is a constitution of many people of high birth/wealth.

**I answer that:** The chief concern of the law is a plan for the common good. This is the office/business of the entire people, in order to match its end.

Reply to Objection 1: The law is present not only in the ruling principle, but also in the subject ruled. So, in that sense, each man is a law unto himself. St. Paul said people show the work of the law written in their hearts.

Reply to Objection 2: A private person can only persuade, but can't bring another person to virtue, because his advice may not be heeded. Such advice lacks the force of the law, said Aristotle. The coercive strength to enforce the law resides in the people or a public figure who inflicts penalties.

Reply to Objection 3: The good of one man's household is still subordinate to that of the whole community, the ultimate end.

**Article 4: Is promulgation essential to the law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because Natural Law needs no promulgation.

Objection 2: The law prescribes and prohibits some actions, but one is still under certain duties even if they aren't present during promulgation, so promulgation is not the nature of the law.

Objection 3: The law imposes a necessity on future transactions, but promulgation is for people who are now present, so it is a dispensable condition.

**On the contrary,** Decretum said that the laws are instituted when promulgated.

**I answer that:** The law rules and measures, so it must have binding force. That is essential. It must apply to the people it was meant to direct, and the application comes about when promulgated, when people's attention is drawn to it. This is necessary for it to have the force of law. In summary, the law is nothing but an ordinance of reason for the common good made by the authority who has care of the community and promulgated.

Reply to Objection 1: Natural Law is promulgated by God, who instills it into men's minds for awareness.

Reply to Objection 2: The law still applies when people are not present, or are initially unaware, because others can make them aware of it.

Reply to Objection 3: Promulgation in the present stretches into the future once it is written down in a code.

**QUESTION 91: VARIETIES OF LAW**

**Article 1: Is there an Eternal Law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because every law concerns subjects, and there were none in existence of the beginning of eternity. Only God is from eternity.

Objection 2: Promulgation is a necessary condition and promulgation back then was impossible as there were no addressees.

Objection 3: The law plans for an end, but eternity has no end.

**On the contrary**, St. Augustine said that law named supreme reason must be understood as unchangeable and eternal.

**I answer that**: As stated above, the law is nothing but a dictate of practical reason issued by a sovereign who governs a complete community. Divine Providence rules the universe, i.e., God's mind, which is eternal.

Reply to Objection 1: God can foresee beings not yet in existence.

Reply to Objection 2: Promulgation can be written or oral, and God created all by his Word.

Reply to Objection 3: The end of Divine government is God himself.

## **Article 2: Is there Natural Law within us?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because Eternal Law is *per se* sufficient to govern mankind, says St. Augustine.

Objection 2: There is law that directs man's activities, as he acts toward an end, but nature is no such end, only survival of the fittest, so there is no law of nature.

Objection 3: The freer a thing, the less it is under a law. Men are freer than animals because they can decide for themselves. Since other animals are not subject to law, neither is man.

**On the contrary**, it has been said in response to Scripture that Gentiles have no law, but do have Natural Law, so they can figure out what is good and what is bad.

**I answer that:** Law is a rule and measure, existing both in the rule and what is being ruled. The closer the rule and the ruled thing is, the more regular and measured it will be. All is ruled and measured by Eternal Law, so all share in it. The sharing in Eternal Law by intelligent creatures is what we call Natural Law. God shines his Divine light on us so we can discern good from evil.

Reply to Objection 1: Natural Law is separate from Eternal Law. The former shares in the latter, but that is not full participation.

Reply to Objection 2: All activity of reason and will springs from our nature, which has an ultimate end, so it makes sense for Natural Law to direct our activity.

Reply to Objection 3: Even non-rational creatures share in Eternal reason in their own way, but only intelligent creatures share in it in a way that we call Natural Law, because only they can actually perceive its meaning.

### **Article 3: Is there a Human Law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because we already showed that Natural Law is a sharing in Eternal law. So, Natural Law suffices, and there is no need for Human Law.

Objection 2: We said above that law is a measure. Human reason doesn't measure, rather it is measured, so it can't issue any law, as Aristotle said in the Metaphysics.

Objection 3: As Aristotle also said therein, a measuring rule should be very dependable. But, human reason is unreliable and uncertain, so no law can proceed from it.

**On the contrary,** St. Augustine postulated two kinds of law: 1) Eternal; and 2) temporal, which is Human.

**I reply that:** As we said above, the law is a kind of dictate of practical reason. The process of theoretical and practical reason are parallel, namely, both start from certain principles and come to certain conclusions. Just as speculative reason draws conclusions



from indemonstrable principles as to knowledge not imparted from nature by theoretical reason, so too from Natural Law does human reason proceed to more particular matters, human laws, provided that the other requirements mentioned above are followed. According to Cicero, justice started with nature, then certain things became custom due to their usefulness, which were later approved and sanctioned, i.e., became law.

Reply to Objection 1: Human reason can't fully participate in Divine reason, so it does so imperfectly and speculatively. Man naturally participates in Eternal Law, but can't have knowledge of each single truth, so man has to make his own particular laws.

Reply to Objection 2: Human reason is not the *per se* rule of things. Rather, principles from nature provide general rules, so then it measures human deeds, only, not all of nature.

Reply to Objection 3: Practical reason is concerned with things that must actually be done, not all sorts of necessary things which are the concern of speculative reason. So, human laws don't have to be as accurate as the conclusions of demonstrative science. Certainty and exactness are not demanded, only that law should fit the matter at hand.

#### **Article 4: Was a Divine Law necessary?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because Natural Law participates in Eternal Law. But, Eternal Law is Divine Law. So, there seems to be no need for it in addition to Natural Law and Human Law derived therefrom.

Objection 2: Scripture says, "God left man in the hand of his own counsel." Such counsel is an act of human reason and Human Law, so there is no need for Divine Law.

Objection 3: By nature, men are more self-contained than other irrational creatures, and they have no need for Divine Law, so man needs it even less.

**On the contrary,** in scripture, David prayed God to "set before me a law the way of Thy

justifications, O Lord.”

**I reply that:** Divine Law is necessary to guide human conduct above and beyond Natural and Human Law, for four reasons: 1) law directs man to act to his end. If man were not directed to act beyond his natural abilities, there would be no need for Divine Law. But, his end of eternal happiness does exceed them, so Divine Law is necessary; 2) Human judgment is uncertain. Different people may create contrary laws. So, Divine Law is needed to end doubt about what should be done and add accuracy/certainty; 3) Man can only make laws as to matters that he is competent to judge, i.e., external acts. But, he knows nothing about internal/interior acts, so Divine Law is needed for the protection of virtue; and 4) According to St. Augustine, man can’t punish or forbid all evil things, which hurts the common good. So, divine law is necessary to supervene and punish/forbid all sins/evil. One of the Psalms touches on all four of these reasons, saying in part that Divine Law gives “wisdom to the little ones.”

Reply to Objection 1: Man shares in both Natural and Eternal Law, but because of his supernatural end, man needs additional/higher direction from God, to share more perfectly in Eternal Law.

Reply to Objection 2: Counsel is a kind of inquiry progressing from principles, but those imparted by nature (Natural Law) are not enough. Additional principles are necessary, as explained above.

Reply to Objection 3: Irrational creatures are not ordained to a higher end, so that comparison fails.

## **Article 5: Is there only one Divine Law?**

Objection 1: It seems there is only one, because where there is only one king and one kingdom, there is but one law. The Scriptures say, “God is King of all the earth.” So,

there is only one.

Objection 2: God intends the same thing for all men, “to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Objection 3: Grace is higher than Natural Law. Natural law is one (the same) for all men, so much more so must Divine Law be one.

**On the contrary,** St. Paul said that the priesthood is two-fold: 1) Levitical; and 2) of Christ. Correspondingly, the Divine Law is also two-fold: 1) Old; and 2) New.

**I reply that:** Distinction is the cause of number. Things may be distinct in two manners: 1) quite different in kind (for example: a horse versus an ox); and 2) fully or underdeveloped but of the same kind (for example: an adult versus a child). It is in the second manner that Divine Law is divided into Old and New Law. Old is when a school boy needs a tutor, and New is when an adult no longer needs one, a difference in development. The differences appear according to three elements already discussed: 1) Remember how we already discussed that the purpose of the law is two-fold: a) material and earthly which matches up with the Old Law; and b) spiritual and heavenly, which is the New Law; 2) The role of the law is to guide human acts to the plan of justice (God), so it includes inner acts of the heart and soul, for which the New Law is more appropriate. The Old restrains the hand, while the New restrains the spirit; and 3) Another purpose is to guide men to keep the commandments. The Old did so by punishment, while the New does so by love (grace). St. Augustine said the difference between them is fear and love.

Reply to Objection 1: The head of a family would have different commands for children compared to adults. Similarly, God has one law for people who are still backward, and another for more advanced people.

Reply to Objection 2: Man can only be saved through Christ. Before He came, God gave then one law to prepare for His coming (to welcome Him), and another thereafter (for saving justice).

Reply to Objection 3: Natural Law is the same for all men regardless of their stage of development, but this is two-fold, based on development.

**Article 6: Is there a law of lust?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because law consists in reason, while lust strays very far from reason.

Objection 2: All law is obligatory, this is not.

Objection 3: The purpose of the law is the common good, but this is only for private satisfaction.

**On the contrary,** Scripture says, “I see another law in my members fighting against the law in my mind”.

**I reply that:** Every ordered tendency can be called a law in a derivative sense. These tendencies are ruled directly or indirectly. Before original sin, reason ruled, but afterward man fell prey to sensuality. It rules non-rational animals directly, while in men it is indirect, like a deviation from the law of reason.

Reply to Objection 1: That argument considers it to be an incentive to evil. Rather, it is more like a punishment after a voluntary bad choice, so now a nobleman must do hard labor.

Reply to Objection 2: That argument treats law as a rule and directive. This is a kind of participation.

Reply to Objection 3: It is not individual if it looks at history, which shows it serves the common good, to the preservation of the species.

## **QUESTION 92: EFFECTS OF LAW**

### **Article 1: Is it an effect of law to make men good?**

Objection 1: It seems not, for men are good due to virtue, which comes from God alone.

Objection 2: The law does not profit a man unless he obeys it, and he does so due to goodness, so goodness is a prerequisite to law, not effected by it.

Objection 3: Law is for the common good. Yet, some men are well-adjusted in public, but mal-adjusted in private. So, the law does not make them good.

Objection 4: Aristotle says some laws are tyrannical, made by tyrants only for profit, not for the common good.

**On the contrary**, Aristotle says making citizens good is the goal of every legislator.

**I reply that**: As we have said, the law is nothing but a decree of reason in the presiding authority whereby subjects are governed. Virtue is being under reason's control, namely, obeying the law requires that. So, the law leads men to virtue, which will either make them good absolutely or relatively. So, even bad things can be relatively good, such as a thief is good as stealing.

Reply to Objection 1: Virtue is two-fold: 1) acquired; and 2) infused. Constant practice serves each.

Reply to Objection 2: Men obey the law for other reasons besides virtue, such as fear of punishment.

Reply to Objection 3: It is enough for society if only the leaders are truly virtuous. Others can be less.

Reply to Objection 4: A tyrannical law is not according to reason, rather, a crooked thing, not a good law.

**Article 2: Are there four acts of law?**

Objection 1: It seems there are four acts of law: 1) commanding; 2) forbidding; 3) permitting; and 4) punishing; but that list is not logical, because all laws are precepts, so the other three are superfluous.

Objection 2: “Advise” should also be included because it is more likely to bring about the common good than a command.

Objection 3: Punishment and rewards should also be included.

Objection 4: St. Augustine said that if a man only obeys out of fear of punishment, it is not a proper function of the law.

**On the contrary**, all law either allows or punishes something.

**I reply that**: A law is a rational assertion in the imperative. Reason brings us to agree with precepts. Precepts of the law are concerned with human acts, which fall into three classes: 1) acts of virtue; 2) acts of vice; and 3) morally neutral acts. Fear insures obedience. So, there are four acts of the law, as listed above.

Reply to Objection 1: Prohibition is a kind of precept, so all law is a precept in a broad sense.

Reply to Objection 2: Advice is only given by private persons who have no business in laying down the law.

Reply to Objection 3: Anyone can reward, but only a minister of the law can punish.

Reply to Objection 4: Even punitive law brings men to good.

**QUESTION 93: THE ETERNAL LAW**

**Article 1: Is Eternal Law the supreme exemplifier in the mind of God?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because it is one, and St. Augustine said God makes each and everything with its own proper meaning, so they must be many.

Objection 2: An essential condition of the law is promulgation by “Word,” which is a personal term for God, whereas reason refers to Divine nature, so Eternal Law (from the Word) and Divine nature are not the same.

Objection 3: St. Augustine said that a law that transcends our minds is Truth. What transcends our minds is Eternal Law, so Truth must be that. However, truth and exemplar are not identical.

**On the contrary,** St. Augustine said, “the Eternal Law is the supreme exemplar to which we should always conform.”

**I reply that:** An exemplar pre-exists in any artist’s mind, so the same occurs for those who make the law. God is like an artist concerning his creation. He is also like a governor of all their acts and motions. So, His Divine wisdom is the exemplar that directs all.

Reply to Objection 1: All law is directed to the common good, so individual stuff is co-ordinated together, unified, and converge into Eternal Law, the exemplar of this order, one.

Reply to Objection 2: The “Word” is two-fold: 1) it itself; and 2) what it expresses. The first is personal to God; the second is expressed to us.

Reply to Objection 3: Ideas in the mind of God are not the same as those in our minds. The Divine mind is Truth itself, the exemplar of Truth itself.

## **Article 2: Is Eternal Law recognized by all?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because St. Paul said, “The things of God knoweth no man...”. Eternal Law is like a thought in God’s mind, so only He can know it.

Objection 2: St. Augustine said Eternal Law arranges everything “in most excellent order.” Only God knows how that will work out; man does not.

Objection 3: St. Augustine said man “cannot pronounce judgment” on Eternal Law. Aristotle said man “can judge well on thing he knows about,” but not this, obviously.

**On the contrary,** St. Augustine said, “a notion of the Eternal Law is imprinted on us.”

**I reply that:** A thing can be known in two ways: 1) in itself; and 2) in its effects. Only God can know the first, namely, Eternal Law in itself. Man can only know it secondarily from its effects, for, as St. Augustine said, every knowing of truth catches some radiance from the Eternal Law, which is the unchangeable Truth. All men share in it to varying degrees.

Reply to Objection 1: We cannot know His things themselves, only their effects, through things He has made.

Reply to Objection 2: No man can fully understand Eternal Law because it is not fully manifested through its effects. We can’t grasp the whole scheme of His excellent order.

Reply to Objection 3: Things are judged in two senses: 1) a cognitive power discerning its proper objective (for example, as a tongue tastes meat). This man can do well; and 2) a superior making a practical judgment about an inferior. In this sense, man can’t pass judgment on Eternal Law.

### **Article 3: Does every law derive from the Eternal Law?**

Objection 1: Apparently not, if we allow for lust already mentioned, which comes from worldly prudence, and “is at enmity (at odds) with God,” according to St. Paul.

Objection 2: No wickedness issues from Eternal Law because it rightly directs all things to an excellent order. Some laws are wicked, so they don’t come from God.

Objection 3: St. Augustine said (natural) “law framed for governing the people rightly permits many things which Divine Providence avenges.”

**On the contrary,** Scripture says, “By me the princes reign, and the lawgivers decree just



things.” Divine Wisdom is the Eternal Law from which all things descend.

**I reply that:** Law implies a plan directing acts to a purpose, a master plan descending to subordinates who may or may not obey it. So, all laws that share in right reason derive from Eternal Law.

Reply to Objection 1: Lust shares in Eternal Law as a penalty. In as much as it renders us prone to sin, however, it lacks the quality of a law.

Reply to Objection 2: When Human Law falls right with reason, it derives from Eternal Law, if not, it is a wicked abuse of the law. Nevertheless, even wicked law keeps some trace of legality, since it is backed by established order supported by Eternal Law.

Reply to Objection 3: Human Law permits some things because it can’t control them, not because it approves of them. Even though Human Law cannot reach Eternal Law, it does descend therefrom.

**Article 4: Are necessary and everlasting things subject to the Eternal Law?**

Objection 1: It seems yes, because all intelligible things come under intelligence. God’s will is intelligent and eternal, so it is ruled by Eternal Law.

Objection 2: Scripture speaks of the Son as being subject to his Father, so the Son, who is eternal, is nevertheless subject to Eternal Law.

Objection 3: Many necessary things are ruled by Divine Providence, including spiritual substances and heavenly bodies in all their stability.

Objection 4: Necessary things are inevitable and unrestrained. However, law is supposed to restrain men from evils, so necessary things are not subject to law.

**[No contrary argument was provided]**

**I reply that:** Eternal Law is the shaping idea in Divine government. Whoever is subject

to Divine government is subject also to the Eternal Law; whoever is not, is not. Such a distinction also applies to the human race. All things created by God, whether necessary or contingent, are subject to Eternal Law, whereas the Divine essence is not subject to it, rather is Eternal Law itself, *per se*.

Reply to Objection 1: We can speak of God's will in two senses: 1) His own willing is not subject to Eternal Law, rather is Eternal Law; and 2) what He wills for us in each of us, which is subject to Eternal Law, intelligence itself.

Reply to Objection 2: The Son was not created, rather naturally begotten, so He is not subject to Eternal Law.

Reply to Objection 3: We grant this argument, because it deals with a necessity bound us in a creaturely being.

Reply to Objection 4: Things that are necessary come from a reality other than themselves.

#### **Article 5: Are the contingent facts of nature under the Eternal Law?**

Objection 1: It seems they are not, because law must be promulgated to rational creatures, so only they come under it, not contingent stuff.

Objection 2: Aristotle said Eternal Law is the supreme reason, but contingent things are unreasonable.

Objection 3: Eternal Law is sheer efficiency, but contingent stuff has defects.

**On the contrary**, Scripture says, "When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment."

**I reply that**: Man's law and God's Eternal Law should not be discussed as if they are on the same level. Strictly speaking, nobody imposes a law on himself. Man cannot lay a law on non-rational creatures, only on other rational creatures subject to him. On the

other hand, God commands the whole universe, so absolutely everything therein is subject to Eternal Law, even non-rational creatures.

Reply to Objection 1: A directive principle is inwardly imprinted on human acts.

Reply to Objection 2: Non-rational creatures do not share or obey human reason, but they do obey Divine reason, because God can move them despite their lack of rationality.

Reply to Objection 3: Failures are interruptions to an ordered pattern, so even they are subject to Eternal Law.

#### **Article 6: Are all human affairs subject to the Eternal Law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because St. Paul said, “If you be led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Objection 2: St. Paul (hereinafter occasionally referenced as “the Apostle”) said, “The Wisdom of the flesh is an enemy of God.” Many men are dominated by that, not God’s Eternal Law.

Objection 3: St. Augustine said, “it is by the Eternal Law that the wicked deserve misery, and the good a life of bliss.” So, men that are already blessed or condemned are far past the condition of deserving, so they are not under Eternal Law.

**On the contrary**, St. Augustine said, “In no way do things evade the laws and ordination of the high Creator, by whom the peace of the universe is administered.”

**I reply that:** There are two ways of being subject to Eternal Law: 1) by way of knowledge (reason); and 2) by way of being acted upon and having received it from an inner principle, which is how non-rational creatures obey it. Rational creatures are subject to it in both ways, yet both manners of sharing are imperfect, decayed, spoiled by vice and darkened by the passions and habits of sin. Good people rise above via grace, virtue, faith and wisdom, so they always act in accordance with it, but even wicked

people who try to avoid it are still subject to it.

Reply to Objection 1: What St. Paul said can be understood in two ways: 1) man may be unwilling to obey, yet still does so, such as from fear of punishment; and 2) from the Spirit, which is not under the law anyway, rather is liberty (intrinsically following the law for all the right reasons).

Reply to Objection 2: Worldly wisdom does not obey God's law because it prompts actions contrary to it. Nevertheless, it is subject to it via the price/penalty it must pay. No man is entirely dominated by worldly wisdom, which can't do away with the entire goodness of human nature.

Reply to Objection 3: Those who deserve happiness (the blessed) and those who deserve misery (the damned) both come under Eternal Law.

#### **QUESTION 94: NATURAL LAW**

##### **Article 1: Is Natural Law a habit?**

Objection 1: It seems so, because Aristotle saw these three in the soul: 1) power of activity; 2) habit of activity; and 3) capacity for being acted on. Since it is neither the first or the third, it must be the second, a habit.

Objection 2: St. Basil referred to Natural Law when he said that conscience (an act of moral judgment) and synderesis (the habit of knowing the first principles of moral conduct) is the law of our understanding. Synderesis is a kind of habit, so Natural Law is, too.

Objection 3: Natural Law is always in man, but reason, to which law belongs, is not always thinking about Natural Law, so the latter is not an act, but a habit.

**On the contrary,** St. Augustine said, "habit is that whereby a man acts when there is a deed of law to be done." But, since it is also present in babies and in the damned even

though they can't act on it, it is not a habit.

**I reply that:** Something can be a habit in two senses: 1) properly in the category of habit; and 2) derivative. Natural Law is not a habit properly and essentially, rather, it is constituted or fashioned by reason. What you do and how you do it are not identical. For example, you compose a speech with grammar. A habit is a quality whereby you act, so a law can't be a habit in the first sense.

Yet, derivatively, a habit refers to things steadily held, such as faith is held by faith. Since Natural Law includes settled convictions, it is a habit in that sense. Similarly, first principles are not habits initially, but do engage and can become them.

Reply to Objection 1: Aristotle was exploring the category to which virtue belongs, so since virtue is among principles of human activity, he listed those three. In addition to these, there are also psychological realities, such as actual willing, things known, and inner qualities such as immortality.

Reply to Objection 2: Just as much as it is a moral habit, synderesis is also the law of our understanding, both of which are first principles of human activity.

Reply to Objection 3: We grant this argument in so far as habit affects and holds Natural Law. But, as for the contrary argument, a settled active disposition could be hindered by something else. For example, as a scientist does not think scientifically while sleeping, or during his youth.

## **Article 2: Does Natural Law contain many precepts or only one?**

Objection 1: Only one, because a law is classified as a precept. If there were many of them, there would be many Natural Laws.

Objection 2: Natural Law is a corollary to human nature, so it must either be one because man is a single whole, or many because man has many manifold parts. But, if

the latter were true, all desires would be part of it.

Objection 3: Law is from reason, which is the same for all humanity, so there is only one.

**On the contrary,** the precepts of Natural Law are to human conduct what the first principles of thought are to demonstration. Since there are several precepts of thought, there are several of Natural Law.

**I reply that:** There is a parallel between precepts of Natural Law for practical reason, and axioms of science for theoretical reason. Both are self-evident beginnings.

A truth is self-evident: 1) in itself; and 2) in our minds. It is the first when the predicate is of the essence of the subject. Sometimes, however, this is not self-evident, such as when the definition of the subject, or what man really is, is not known. Boëthius says some are generally known to all.

But, others are only self-evident to the well-informed, who know what the terms of the proposition mean. For example, only some people understand that an angel is not a bodily substance.

So, things enter our apprehension in a certain ordered range. That which first appears is the real, the first indemonstrable principle which needs no affirming or denying. All other propositions are based on it.

Thus, the real enters during apprehension. The good, however, enters when practical reason is bent on doing something, because every agent acts for an end, and ends carry some sort of goodness. Thus, the first principle of practical reason is based on the good which all things seek. The first command of the law is to seek the good, and avoid evil. So, Natural Law extends to all human goods.

Since good is an end, and evil is the opposite, reason must follow the good end,

and actively pursue it, as it simultaneously must shun evil.

The commands of Natural Law follow an order that corresponds to our natural tendencies. The first tendency in man goes toward the good of nature he shares with all things, namely, self-preservation. Natural Law corresponds to that, engaging in such maintenance of human life.

Second, man tends toward more specific things he has in common with other animals, such as coupling, rearing children, etc.

Third, man has an appetite for the good of his rational nature, such as truths about God, and of living in society. Natural Law corresponds to these matters, indicating man should shun ignorance, not offend others, etc.

Reply to Objection 1: All of these converge on one common, primary precept.

Reply to Objection 2: All drives of human nature, including emotional responses to pain and pleasure, come under Natural law, and all have one single root.

Reply to Objection 3: Although single in itself, reason will have to direct many matters of human life.

### **Article 3: Is every act of virtue of Natural Law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because its commands are for the common good, whereas virtue is temperate for the private good of individuals.

Objection 2: Sin is the opposite of virtue. Some sins are against nature, i.e. unnatural.

Objection 3: All men agree about what follows nature, but all don't agree about acts of virtue. What is virtuous for one is vicious for another.

**On the contrary,** Damascene says the virtues are natural.

**I reply that:** one can refer to acts of virtue in two ways: 1) in so far as they are virtuous; and 2) in so far as they are acts of a specific kind.

In the first respect, all are matters of Natural Law, because everything man tends toward naturally, is encompassed thereby. All things naturally tend toward things that benefit their natures, such as fire tends toward heat. Since the rational soul is man's proper form, he naturally tends to act according to it, and according to virtue. So, all acts of virtue are of Natural Law, because each man's reason dictates virtuous activity.

But, in the second respect, only some would be encompassed thereby. Others that are not immediately prompted by nature would not, so they would have to be investigated and reasoned out to see if they would help man attain a good life.

Reply to Objection 1: Temperance concerns many natural desires for food, etc., but all concern the common good of nature.

Reply to Objection 2: Man's nature includes both what is proper to him, and what he has in common with other animals. Sins are against man himself in the first respect, and some effect other animals in the second respect.

Reply to Objection 3: Men who deem acts of virtue as virtuous are not themselves good men.

#### **Article 4: Is Natural Law the same for all?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because Scripture, etc., says it is in the Gospel, and all do not obey it, so it is not the same for all.

Objection 2: Aristotle said in his Ethics that all lawful acts are said to be just acts. But, in the same work, he also said nothing is just for all.

Objection 3: Each man's constitution is different, causing each to deserve different things.

**On the contrary,** Isidore said, "Natural right is common to all nations."

**I reply that:** As we have already demonstrated, all things to which men tend are covered



by Natural Law, including the tendency to act according to reason. Now, reason proceeds from common principles applied to particular conclusions, according to Aristotle's Physics. But, theoretical and practical reason differ somewhat. Basically, we can be more mistaken with practical matters, as they concern human acts.

In questions of theory, truth is the same for all men, both in the principles and he conclusions. Some men, however, would not agree with all conclusions. For questions of action, truth is not the same for all practical matters and for all men. And even those who act rightly may not be aware how right they are.

So, only general principles in both theoretical and practical reason are the same for all men. Truth of theory may not be recognized, and truth in practice may afford no unanimity.

All men would agree we should act intelligently, a starting point from which specific conclusions could come. For example, goods held in trusts (bailments) should be returned to their owners. But, exceptions could come up where that would actually be more injurious or unreasonable.

So, Natural Law is the same for first principles, but as for conclusions, exceptions, anomalies, obstructions, etc., may impede or distort them, such as bad customs, racial bias, etc.

Reply to Objection 1: The Old and the New Testaments should not be taken as Natural Law because much is above our nature. Yet, "do unto others" is a good rule.

Reply to Objection 2: Aristotle was referring to things that are naturally just in both their general principles and their particular conclusions. Some cases are; some are not.

Reply to Objection 3: Reason should rule all of man's subordinate desires, and all tendencies must be reasoned out intelligently prior to taking action.

### **Article 5: Can Natural Law be changed?**

Objection 1: It seems that it can be changed, because some say laws must be written to correct Natural Law, and that which can be corrected can be changed.

Objection 2: The killing of innocent people, adultery and theft are obviously against Natural Law. God ordered Abraham to kill his own son, etc., so it can be altered.

Objection 3: Isidore says common ownership of property and equal liberty are Natural laws, but Human Law has changed that, so Natural Law can be changed.

**On the contrary**, According to the Decretum, Natural Law dated from the rise of rational creation, does not vary according to period, and remains unchangeable.

**I reply that**: Change can be either additions or subtractions. Additions would not change Natural Law negatively, rather would be beneficial. As for subtraction, first principles could not be, only secondary precepts could be subtracted. So, only particular conclusions could be subtracted/changed in rare occasions.

Reply to Objection 1: Written law corrected Natural Law only by supplying what has been lacking, or because some hearts of men had decayed as to the recognition of evil.

Reply to Objection 2: All men suffer death because of original sin. So, God can inflict death on anyone without acting unjustly, regardless if the man is guilty or innocent.

Reply to Objection 3: Private property and slavery arises from human contrivance (selfishness), not from Natural Law, so it only adds to it.

### **Article 6: Can Natural Law be abolished from the human heart?**

Objection 1: It seems that it can be, because Scripture speaks of lawless men. Others say such men could be restored by grace.

Objection 2: Although the law of grace is more powerful than that of nature, it can be wiped away by sin, so Natural Law, which is much lower, can be, too.

Objection 3: Many human statutes have been enacted against Natural Law, so it can be destroyed in men's hearts.

**On the contrary**, St. Augustine said that God's law is written in men's hearts, and no wickedness can efface it. It is Natural Law, so it can't be effaced, because Natural Law comes from God's law.

**I reply that**: As for first common principles, Natural Law cannot be removed from men's hearts. They can, however, refuse to apply it to a particular course of action, because of lust or some other passion.

As for secondary principles, it can be changed via persuasions, errors, perverse customs, corrupt habits, all of which are unnatural sins.

Reply to Objection 1: Sin only cancels Natural Law as to secondary precepts.

Reply to Objection 2: Grace is more powerful than man's nature, but it is more essential and permanent for man.

Reply to Objection 3: This is true of secondary precepts, against which legislatures have sometimes passed wrongful enactments.

## **QUESTION 95: HUMAN LAW IN ITSELF**

### **Article 1: Are man-made laws expedient?**

Objection 1: They do not seem to be expedient because they seem to serve no useful purpose. The intent behind all laws is for men to become good by them. But, it would be better if they were not forced, rather, did so voluntarily.

Objection 2: Aristotle said that men have recourse to judges, animate (live) justice which is much better than inanimate laws.

Objection 3: The law directs human acts, for which there must be infinite laws. It would be better to have one man decide, instead of had and fast regulation.

**On the contrary**, Isidore said that the law must stop threats, safeguard the innocent and curb harm by dread of punishment. So, laws must be enacted.

**I reply that:** Man has an innate bent towards virtue, but must be educated to reach his fullness. Nature does not supply him with a complete product. It can only be done by suppressing pleasures, etc. Some get it quicker than others. Eventually, they all should do it by their own accord.

So, laws must be established in order for man to achieve virtue. When separated from law and justice, according to Aristotle, he is the worst animal, because he can use weapons of reason.

Reply to Objection 1: Voluntariness is best, but coercion may be necessary.

Reply to Objection 2: Animate justice is comparatively rare, and magistrates are likely to be swayed.

Reply to Objection 3: Some individual matters can't be covered by written law, so they must be left up to animate judges.

## **Article 2: Is every positive law derived from Natural Law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because it is indifferent, whereas Natural Law is not.

Objection 2: Statutory rights are different than natural rights, so commands established by Human Law are not drawn from Natural Law.

Objection 3: Natural Law is the same for all, according to Aristotle; Human Law is not.

Objection 4: There is always a reason as to why commands come from Natural Law, but not for those set up by the authorities.

**On the contrary**, awe and respect for the law has sanctioned measures originating from nature and recommended by custom.

**I reply that:** St. Augustine observed that there never seems to have been a law that was

unjust, so all commands therefrom are also just. Things are just if they follow a rule of reason. The first rule of reason is Natural Law. So, all laws laid down have the force of Natural Law because they all flow from it.

Commands can be traced to Natural Law in two ways: 1) drawn deductively like conclusions from premises; 2) grounded on it like constructional implementations of general directives. The first process is like that of science in which inferences are demonstratively drawn from principles. The second process is like an art which picks a shape, as an architect would pick a particular style for a house.

Some commands are conclusions drawn from Natural Law. For example, “don’t commit murder” can be inferred from “don’t harm anyone.” Others are based on constructions. For example, by indicating that crime must be punished, in general, but not by posting specific penalties.

So, commands issued from the first process have the force of Natural Law, but those from the second only have the force of Human (positive) Law.

Reply to Objection 1: Aristotle was referring to commands enacted by positive law as determinate and specific shapes given to Natural Law.

Reply to Objection 2: This concerns the first process.

Reply to Objection 3: Because of the diversity of human affairs, common principles of Natural Law still do not cover them. So, particular outcomes flow from positive law.

Reply to Objection 4: This concerns the second process, wherefore expert men of law have provided insight.

**Article 3: Does Isidore describe the qualities of positive law well?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because he said it is honorable, fair, not composed for personal gain. He also said it is based on reason if it is: 1) consistent with religion; 2)

agrees with good discipline; and 3) furthers our welfare.

Objection 2: Cicero said fairness is part of honorableness, so if a law is honorable, adding fairness would be superfluous.

Objection 3: According to Isidore, custom is contrary, so it s not a quality of law.

Objection 4: Necessity is two-fold: 1) absolute; and 2) hypothetical. The first is absolute, so it does not depend on human judgment or legislation, whereas the second is, because it concerns means for ends.

**On the contrary,** Isidore is an authority himself.

**I reply that:** Whatever has a purpose must be adapted to it. For example, a saw is shaped for cutting. There should also be rules and measures configured toward that end. Human Law meets both requirements because it is ordered toward a purpose, and is a rule and measure itself ruled and measured by higher laws, both Natural and Divine.

The purpose of Human Law is to be useful to men, which is why Isidore listed the three conditions mentioned prior. All other conditions come back to these three: 1) consistent with religion as corresponding to Divine Law; 2) agreeing with good discipline as per Natural Law; and 3) furthering human welfare as corresponding to human usefulness. Honor concerns the first. Fair, and befitting place and time, etc., concerns the second, because human discipline has three requirements: 1) reasonable order of things, indicated by the word “fairness; 2) feasibility, taking man’s natural ability into account, and possibly as opposed to impossibility; and 3) right and proper circumstances befitting place and time. Back now to the third condition above. Law is advantageous for human well-being, necessary to thwart evil, useful to obtain good, and clearly stated to avoid harm. So, law is ordered toward the common good.

Reply to Objections 1, 2, 3 and 4: The replies to these objections are evident.

**Article 4: Does Isidore divide Human Laws logically?**

Objection 1: It seems his division does not fit, because he includes international law (“*jus gentium*”), saying that almost all people use it. But, he had already said that natural justice is common to all nations, so *jus gentium* comes under Natural, not positive Law.

Objection 2: Commands which have the same force do not differ formally as legally binding, only materially as to what they are about. He, however, separated ordinances, senatorial resolutions, etc., which have the same commonality of force, so division is unnecessary.

Objection 3: Besides magistrates, priests and soldiers, he also names military and public law (for magistrates and priests), so it seems there should be specific names for other kinds of law fitting such offices.

Objection 4: Incidental classifications can be omitted, such as the name of the particular legislator who sponsored the law.

**On the contrary,** Isidore’s authority is enough.

**I reply that:** A topic is divided essentially as to the components of its nature. For example, animals can be divided into rational or non-rational with respect to their souls, but non-essential differences such as black and white colors would be irrelevant. Similarly, Human Law can be divided into four essential elements: 1) one depends on Natural Law. So, in turn, positive law can be divided into: a) *jus gentium*, i.e., like conclusions drawn from Natural Law, such as laws for buying and selling, which are very important for man to live socially. Aristotle said man is by nature a social animal in his Politics; and b) constructions which are instead proper to civil law, in which each political community decides for itself what is fitting; 2) another, the purpose of which is to benefit the common good. In this respect, it can be divided into special laws for

particular people who work for the common good, such as priests, rulers, soldiers, etc.; 3) another that is instituted by the ruler/governor of a particular political community, so it can be divided among the members of the regime. Regimes include democracies, monarchies, aristocracies, oligarchies, tyrannies, and best of all, a blend of the best of each - - men of birth coupled with sanctions denoted by the common people, and 4) another, the purpose of which is to direct human acts. For example, laws that prohibit adultery or assassinations. So, they should be differentiated by their subject matter, not their authors.

Reply to Objection 1: *Jus gentium* is natural to man, in the sense that it is a conclusion all men could readily agree upon. Yet, it should be distinguished from Natural Law, especially that which is common to all animals.

Reply to Objections 2, 3 and 4: These replies should be clear from the above.

## **QUESTION 96: THE POWER OF HUMAN LAW**

### **Article 5: Should Human Law be laid down as a general command?**

Objection 1: Yes, it seems particular things should be laid down more than general things. So, particular case decisions, decrees, etc., bearing on individual matters should be laid down.

Objection 2: Law is a directive for human acts, which are individual events, so Human Law should bear on individual cases more than general patterns.

Objection 3: Laws are rules and measures for human acts. According to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, measures should be exact. So, laws should be particular.

**On the contrary,** laws are framed according to recurring events, not chance events that may only happen once.

**I reply that:** The end of the law is the common good, so it should not be composed for



private benefit, rather, the general welfare of all. Yet, that encompasses many things, so it must cover many personalities, occupations, and occasions. Many businesses serve the common good. According to St. Augustine, law should be persistent, not temporary.

Reply to Objection 1: Aristotle said positive justice has three parts: 1) general commands, which are broad measures that start with indifferent principles; 2) enactments for particular cases, privileges, or private laws, which look to individual persons, yet cover many affairs; and 3) the particular application of decrees, such as specific sentences.

Reply to Objection 2: Standards encompass several things. All things in the same class should only have one rule. Laws for every little thing would be pointless, so laws must cover more than one single individual action.

Reply to Objection 3: All matters do not require the same degree of certitude. For example, with contingent matters, it is enough to know the truth for the majority of instances.

## **Article 2: Is it the business of Human Law to restrain all vice?**

Objection 1: It seems so, because Isidore said laws should repress effrontery, and such repression would be insufficient unless all moral evils were restrained.

Objection 2: One purpose of the law is to make man virtuous, and man can't be virtuous unless he rejects vices, so the law must control all vices.

Objection 3: Human Law is derived from Natural Law. Vices conflict with Natural Law, so Human Law must hold them down.

**On the contrary,** St. Augustine said that the law rightly permits some things which Divine Providence punishes. It punishes all vice, but Human Law rightly tolerates some.

**I reply that:** Laws are rules and measures for human acts. Measures can differ among

different things, so it is alright to have different standards. So, laws should be appointed to men according to their condition, thus it is alright to have different laws for different men.

All men do not act the same. Some have virtue, while others lack it. To children, for instance, certain laws do not apply, which would otherwise afford punishment for adults. So, many things can be excused of children, and of people with mediocre morals.

Law is laid down for many people, the majority of which lack high morals. So, it doesn't forbid all vices, only grave ones which the average man can afford, especially those that harm others, such as neighbors, such as murder, theft, etc.

Reply to Objection 1: Effrontery concerns assailing of others, and damaging our neighbors, which is forbidden by Human Law.

Reply to Objection 2: Law brings people to virtue step by step, not suddenly. If a crowd of imperfect men were suddenly burdened with the responsibilities of highest virtue, they would despise and condemn it, and cause worse evils.

Reply to Objection 3: Natural Law shares in Eternal Law, but Human Law falls short of that. But, according to St. Augustine, that does not mean that Human Law should be disapproved of. Human Law should not forbid all that Natural Law does.

### **Article 3: Does Human Law prescribe acts of all virtues?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because acts of virtue oppose acts of vice, and all vices are not forbidden, so all acts are not covered by Human Law.

Objection 2: It is from virtue itself that actual exercises spring. Virtue is the eventual purpose of the law. Yet, actually being virtuous is not required now/yet.

Objection 3: Law is ordered to the common good. Some acts of virtue concern only private good, so it doesn't cover every virtuous act.

**On the contrary**, Aristotle said that the law bids us to be temperate, etc.

**I reply that:** Virtues are specifically differentiated according to their objectives. All of them involve both private and common good. For example, a courageous man may defend both a friend, or the state.

Since the law is ordered to the common good, all virtues can be enjoined by it. But, it does not enjoin every virtuous act, only those which serve the common good, either immediately or subsequently.

Reply to Objection 1: The law does not command all virtuous acts, or forbid all vice. However, some virtues may fall under its precepts, and some vices are banned, for the common good.

Reply to Objection 2: Virtuous acts have two aspects: 1) a deed of virtue, such as fair dealing, brave acts of courage, etc., some of which the law prescribes; and 2) virtuous style, which is the end of the law, but does not fall under any particular precept.

Reply to Objection 3: No virtue is without some activity ministering to the common good, either directly or indirectly.

#### **Article 4: Does Human Law bind a man in conscience?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because it does not set up an obligation in the court of conscience, the forum “*internum*”, your own mind. An inferior power has no jurisdiction in a superior court. Human Law is lower than Divine Law, so it can’t impose judgment on the Divine Law of conscience.

Objection 2: Conscience hinges on God’s commandments, which are sometimes nullified or voided by Human Laws, rather than being imposed thereby.

Objection 3: Sometimes Human Laws are wicked, oppressing the poor, etc. But, all can lawfully escape wicked laws, so they do not effect conscience.

**On the contrary,** Scripture says that a person who endures pain while suffering injury for the sake of conscience will be approved of.

**I reply that:** Positive law is either just or unjust. If just, it has the binding force of Eternal Law from which it is derived.

Laws are said to be just on three accounts: 1) from their end, the common good; 2) from their authority when what is enacted does not exceed the lawmaker's authority; and 3) from their form, when proportionate burdens are placed on all people for the good of all. Since an individual is part of society, laws placed on particular persons are just, and oblige the bar of conscience.

Laws are unjust in two ways: 1) unfair in human terms; and 2) against God. As for the first, they are contrary to human good in the three ways mentioned above: 1) from their end, such as unfair taxation; 2) from their author, when he enacts a law beyond his power; and 3) from their form, when laws are dispensed inequitably. Indeed, these would be outrageous rather than laws. But, as St. Augustine said, these would not effect your court of conscience, because you could turn the other cheek. As for the second, they can be contrary to God's rights. For example, some laws of tyrants permit idolatry. We cannot observe them, rather we must obey God, not men.

Reply to Objection 1: According to St. Paul, there is no authority except from God. He who resists God will have a guilty conscience.

Reply to Objection 2: This concerns Human Laws directed against God's commandments. In doing, they go beyond the order of power, so they shouldn't be obeyed.

Reply to Objection 3: Such laws would also go beyond the lawmaker's authority, so they would not have to be obeyed if one could resist them without scandal.

**Article 5: Is everybody subject to the law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because St. Paul said the law is not laid down for the just, so they are not subject to it.

Objection 2: All who are led by the higher spirit of Divine Law (privately) need not be restrained by (lower) public law.

Objection 3: A sovereign is not subject to law, rather, is exempt.

**On the contrary,** St. Paul said that all persons are subject to governing authorities.

**I reply that:** Natural Law has the double role of: 1) guiding human acts; and 2) constraining them. So, a man can be subject to law on both counts.

In the first respect, all that are subject to a governing authority are subject to its laws. A person may not be subject if: 1) he owes no allegiance; or 2) he comes under a higher law.

In the second respect, virtuous men are not subject to constraints, because their will harmonizes with the law, whereas the will of the wicked clashes with it, so only wicked men are subject to constraints.

Reply to Objection 1: This concerns constraint. The righteous are not subject to it, rather, are a law unto themselves. According to St. Paul, the law is written in their hearts.

Reply to Objection 2: Spiritual men are led by higher law, so are they are not subject to law inconsistent with it. Yet, they are subject to it in the sense that such laws share in Eternal Law, so for the Lord's sake, they should be subject to every human institution, according to Scripture.

Reply to Objection 3: No one is compelled by himself; no one can pass sentence on himself. Yet, the law imposed for all other men should cover him, too. He should practice what he preaches. So, he is above the law in the sense that he can change it and

grant pardons, but is not exempt from the law for these other reasons.

**Article 6: May one subject to law rightly act against its letter?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because according to St. Augustine, he who disregards the law seems to be questioning it, so that is unlawful.

Objection 2: Only makers of the law can interpret it. Those subject to it do not make it, so they can't interpret it, rather, they should act according to it.

Objection 3: Every wise man knows how to explain his intention. Those who make laws are wise, so the words used in the law are enough of an explanation.

**On the contrary**, inanimate laws cannot speak, so meaning must be gathered from motives, not the mere words, of the lawmakers.

**I reply that**: Every law is ordained for the common good. If so, it has the force and quality of law; if not, it cannot bind. Often, however, a law that is good for the majority of cases is harmful for the minority. Since a lawmaker can't envision all cases, he can only legislate for the majority. If, however, a case is handed down that would harm the common good, it should not be obeyed. For example, keeping city gates closed is good for public safety. If, however, citizens were pursued by enemies and could not enter, they should be opened even though that would go against the existing law.

Yet, but for such sudden risk, no particular person should construe the law. That should be left up to governing authorities who can grant dispensations (pardons) in exceptional cases. Urgent danger, however, is its own dispensation, out of public necessity.

Reply to Objection 1: He who acts counter to the law is not questioning it entirely, but rather, its application to him in particular.

Reply to Objection 2: A man who follows the law does not interpret it, rather, settles it

in a real situation. If danger would occur, the lawmaker himself would want him to disobey it. If uncertain, the man should follow the law and consult his superior.

Reply to Objection 3: No one is wise enough to foresee every individual case, so a law cannot fit any possibility if the legislator attempts to write it all down. In fact, too much detail would muddy the law.

## **QUESTION 97: LAW AND CHANGE**

### **Article 1: Can human law be altered in some way?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because it is derived from unchangeable Natural Law.

Objection 2: A measure that supersedes all should remain fixed. Human Law measures all human acts, so it should be fixed.

Objection 3: It is a quality of law to be just and right. But, things that are right are always right, so once a law, always a law.

**On the contrary**, according to St. Augustine, no matter how just, temporal law can be changed with the passage of time.

**I reply that**: The statement that human law is a kind of dictate of reason directing human acts has two clauses. A just cause for change can arise from both: 1) from the side of reason. Man advances step by step, developing according to reason. This is true for both theoretical and practical sciences/questions. It takes a lot of work to develop things that are not defective; and 2) from the side of the human beings whose acts it regulates. Law can be changed as their conditions change. For example, St. Augustine said that if people have become moderate and responsible, they may choose their own magistrates, but not if they have become corrupt.

Reply to Objection 1: Natural Law shares in Eternal Law. The one thing they have in common is unchangeability. Human Law, however, is imperfect and mutable, and so is

the law made thereby. Natural Law contains universal commands that are universal, whereas human positive law contains particular commands.

Reply to Objection 2: Measures should be as permanent as possible. But, the human world is mutable, so human laws cannot be entirely unchangeable.

Reply to Objection 3: Unlike physical things, which are right in themselves (or not), laws are only right with respect to the common good, so rightness can vary.

**Article 2:     Should a Human Law always be changed when it can be improved an to meet the situation?**

Objection 1: It seems that it should if a change would be for the better. Like art, Human Laws are invented by human ingenuity. We change artificial things to improve them, so the law should be, too.

Objection 2: We learn from the past. Laws should be changed to keep up with progress.

Objection 3: Laws should be changed as we gain increased experience.

**On the contrary**, it is bad to break old transitions.

**I reply that**: Laws should be changed for the common good. At first, it will cause a kind of loss, and such breaches of custom may seem grave. Such change weakens its restraining power to a certain extent, so it should only be changed if something else will make up for the loss, such as highly important and evident gain, or an urgent necessity for change caused by an old law itself or by its observance. The benefits should be evident.

Reply to Objection 1: Art only comes from human inventiveness, whereas laws gain strength through custom, so laws should not be changed as quickly.

Reply to Objections 2 and 3: This does not concern improvement, rather, great usefulness or necessity.



**Article 3: Can custom obtain the force of the law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because Human Law is derived from Natural and Divine law, and customs can't change either one.

Objection 2: Two wrongs don't make a right. It is wrong to change law, and to keep changing it.

Objection 3: Custom gains strength through acts of private persons, but laws should only be changed by public authorities.

**On the contrary**, St. Augustine said, "The usages of God's people and the institutions of our forefathers are to be held for law ...".

**I reply that**: All law proceeds from the reason and will of the lawgiver, Natural and Divine from God, and Human from man, regulated by reason. Man will choose what seems to have worked well. Both words and repeated deeds can give rise to law. In that way, custom can acquire the force of law, abolish, and interpret other Human Laws.

Reply to Objection 1: No custom can, however, acquire the force of Natural or Divine Law.

Reply to Objection 2: Sometimes Human Laws do not meet a situation, so it would be possible to lawfully act alongside it. So, such acts are not wrong when laws fail to meet the case at hand. When many instances arise, laws are no longer good - - custom will show that. If the reason for the law is still good, it may prevail, regardless. Yet, to set aside the customs of a whole people would be impracticable.

Reply to Objection 3: A self-governing human group can readily customize the law. If not, ruling authorities can choose to do so.

**Article 4: May rulers of the people grant dispensations in matters of Human Law?**

Objection 1: It seems not, because leaving gaps for private convenience would not bring about the common good. The good of all is better than that of one man.

Objection 2: Those who are set over others are commanded to act objectively, the same for all.

Objection 3: No man can grant dispensations from Natural or Divine Law. Human Law derives from them, so dispensations shouldn't be granted under it, either.

**On the contrary,** Scripture says, "A dispensation is committed to me."

**I reply that:** Proper dispensation is proportionate, equal for all. Governors of households and the head of any group must do that.

Sometimes what is good for most people is bad for some individuals. Except for emergencies, leaving decisions to someone's discretion would be dangerous. Such a person could grant dispensations, but they should only be based on reasonable grounds, not his own pleasure. Otherwise, he would be unfaithful, unwise, untrustworthy and foolish.

Reply to Objection 1: Dispensations are not granted to prejudice the common good, rather, to advance it.

Reply to Objection 2: It is alright to grant favoritism to unequal people in order to achieve equality and equal respect.

Reply to Objection 3: As far as its common precepts go, no dispensations can be allowed for Natural Law, but they can for conclusions drawn from it, and should not be done by private persons.

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### **b. Yet Another Surprise**

Since the rest of this dissertation has been rather light-hearted, you may not have expected this sudden (yet brief) turn to logical rigor. Even this befits my entire theme, however, for it demonstrates the power of a humble hero, especially is seemingly silent or unexpected!

### **c. Some of Aquinas' Major Substantive Points**

Above and beyond such logical rigor, each and every part of each and every question, etc., of Aquinas' Treatise on Law<sup>346</sup> also has vast substantive merit, which is why it was not merely summarized herein. Some of his main points, however, deserve special attention:

- (1) The focus of the law is action, either telling us what to do, or what not to do. (*see* Question 90, Article 1);
- (2) The nature of the law is to be a principle of human acts, a rule and a measure. (*see* Question 90, Article 2);
- (3) Every law is shaped to the common good because one man is part of the happiness of a whole community, so subordination of the individual to some extent is necessary for the common good. (*see* Question 90, Article 2);
- (4) To have binding force, the law must be promulgated. (*see* Question 90, Article 3);
- (5) The law is nothing but an ordinance of reason for the common good made by an authority who has care of a community. (*see* Question 90, Article 3);
- (6) The law is nothing but a dictate of practical reason issued by a sovereign who governs a complete community. (*see* Question 91, Article 1);
- (7) Law is a rule and measure, existing both in the rule and what is being measured.

- (see Question 91, Article 2);
- (8) Man shares in both Natural and Eternal Law. (see Question 91, Article 4);
  - (9) The Old Testament guides men to keep the commandments by punishment while the New does so by love/grace. (see Question 91, Article 5);
  - (10) The law leads men to virtue. (see Question 92, Article 1);
  - (11) There are four main acts of law: 1) commanding; 2) forbidding; 3) permitting; and 4) punishing. (see Question 92, Article 2);
  - (12) The end of the law is the common good, so it should not be composed for private benefit, rather the general welfare of all. (see Question 96, Article 1);
  - (13) The law of virtuous men harmonizes with the law. (see Question 96, Article 5);
  - (14) The law is ordained for the common good. If so, it has the force and quality of law; if not, it cannot bind. (see Question 96, Article 6);
  - (15) Human law is a kind of dictate of reason directing human acts. It is based on Natural and Eternal Law, but unlike those types of law, it is imperfect and mutable. (see Question 97, Article 1);
  - (16) Change, however, weakens Human Law's restraining power to a certain extent, so it should only be changed if something else will make up for the loss. (see Question 97, Article 2);
  - (17) Man will choose what seems to have worked well. (see Question 97, Article 3); and
  - (18) Dispensations may be granted, but they should only be based upon reasonable grounds, not private pleasure, foolishness, etc. (see Question 97, Article 4).

In relation to this dissertation, however, most relevant are those that indicate that the law leads men to virtue (see Question 92, Article 1); that the individual must be subordinated

to some extent for the common good (*see* Question 90, Article 2); and most importantly, that the focus of law is **action** (*see* Question 90, Article 1)(emphasis added).

### G. Plan of Action

Having deconstructed the foregoing Hegelian/Augustinian conclusion, but only to the extent of postulating a newfound and/or renewed respect for Philosophy, especially in the world today, our next goal is to formulate a specific plan of **action**.

For, as we have discussed in depth, it is not virtuous to merely think however freely open, to be passively pulled by Culture Clown puppeteers into the slavery that comes from various evils, including debt-capitalism, and too much tyrannical freedom. We cannot sit back and watch like a crowd of spectators--we must make our own movie!

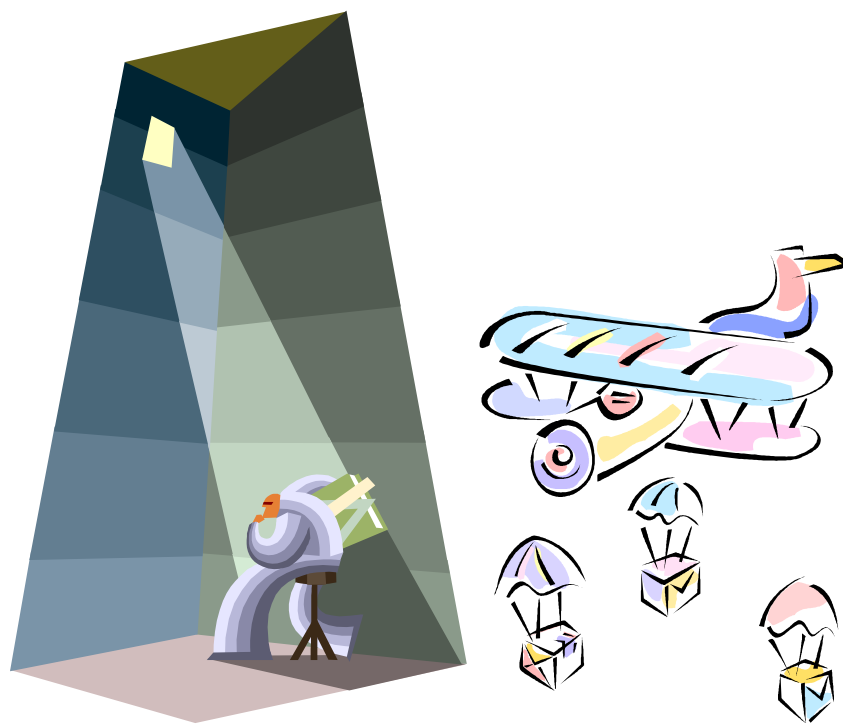
Alas, however, this dissertation is about to end, the lid/cover is about to close on this book/box. Will it leave you in a lurch, suddenly take the training wheels off your tricycle, throw you into the water to sink or swim all by yourself?

Fear not, for even if St. Peter closes the gates to heaven, St. Mary shall open a window. This book/box may close, but many more shall soon open, like ever blooming roses...



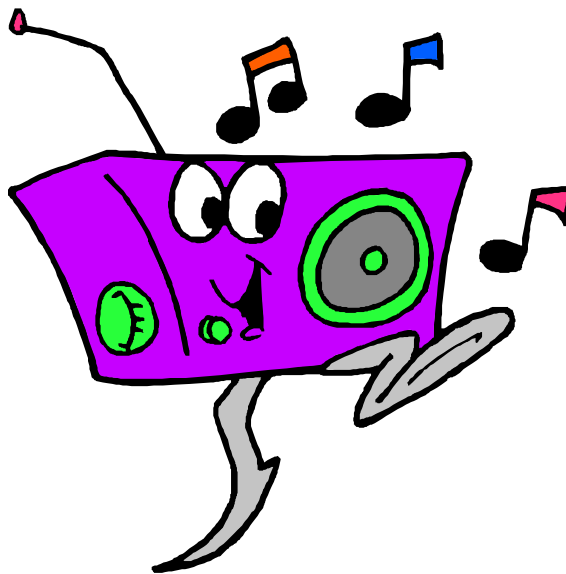
**Chapter X:**

**One Box Closes  
and Another Opens**



**A. I'm So Glad We Had This Time Together**

Our time together shall shortly end, for this dissertation has just about been duly executed. As Bob Hope used to say, "I'm so glad we had this time together." We shared ideas, and sorrows, pleasure and pain. We discussed and deconstructed concepts and conclusions, and built and constructed them once again. We solved a riddle and revealed a hero. We listened to music inspired by lyrical intercessions, and danced to a different drummer, a selfless tune. In short, together, we thought outside and within many boxes, out and back, round and round, again and again:

**B. Boxes Yet To Come**

One item, however, remains undone.

We must formulate a plan of action, a course of conduct, for all the "boxes" yet to come...

**C. Back To The Future**

Before we can go forward, however, we must go back to the beginning.

For psychological closure, please turn back and consult the cover of this dissertation. The picture of St. Michael is perhaps most memorable:



The well-known Biblical story regarding St. Michael is quite relevant to the theme of this dissertation. According to Scripture, Lucifer was God's Archangel before St. Michael. Lucifer, however, suddenly became excessively greedy and ambitious, seeking to abuse his strength and power position to overthrow God, and to become God himself.

So, God sent St. Michael to avenge Lucifer's evil deeds, and St. Michael prevailed. It should be noted that St. Michael was just as powerful as Lucifer. But, instead of such excessive vice, he opted for moderate virtue. He prevailed over Lucifer without seeking to become God himself, and God rewarded him justly. Thus, this story is especially appropriate in light of the psychological evil discussed prior herein in-depth, that the death of the Idea of God causes unto each individual person, namely, a "Lucifer state psychological" (*see* herein Chapter II, subsection C2).

This story, however, can also be easily misunderstood to advocate vengeance. In reality, revenge has an obvious beginning, but no certain end. It can go on, and on, and on. Many people do not realize that evil people may not stop even after such vengeance is taken. So, vengeance may be necessary again, and again, also. In light thereof, St. Michael, may not be the best example.

Please, therefore, consult the cover once again and notice the simplest, and least



obvious image of all, that which is partially hidden inside the transparent box. You may not have even noticed it at all amidst such forceful and colorful other images. It, however, is Hope with a capital “H”, the best of the best. We tried to find it elsewhere, but it was really there the entire time, both inside each of us, and in, by through, and because of the Idea of God. It was patiently waiting for us the entire time, partially hidden, yet watching us with eyes wide open, hoping for us to come back to it with all of our hearts, all the way. It was right in front of our faces the entire time, we just couldn’t see the forest for the trees.

*Witnesseth, therefore, with reverent awe and wonder that this book/box was nothing but a transparent looking glass, a window to your very own heart, mind and soul that St. Mary opened, when all Hope seemed lost.*

#### **D. Invincible Shield, Yet Achilles’ Heel**

This box has also bestowed upon you an invincible shield, an impenetrable coat of armor, that you, the “Lord” of that Ring, can use/wear to defy mortal death, suffering, pain, i.e., all the evils that escaped Pandora’s box. Indeed, as discussed prior, bullets will no longer harm you, not any sort of worldly hemlock.

Beware, however, for every superhero has an Achilles’ heel. Your kryptonite (despair) shall be your very own egocentric, egological self. It will not be a foreign substance, but the alter ego of your very own self. If you prevail over it first, via the aforementioned Hegelian/Augustinian self-negation guided by the Idea of God, and soaring on the wing of Hope, others will not be able to use it against you. Thus, what you have really been given, is nothing but a choice, a free choice of the will.<sup>347</sup> Since it is

free, it is dangerous. So, what will you do with it?

**E. What Will You Do?**

And so, having courageously embarked on the mystery, the challenge that unfolded herefrom like bounteous roses, you have also found that even the revealed hero, namely, you, are not a rose without thorn. This, the bottom line question, the most important box thusly emerging both before and behind your very own eyes, the very core of this dissertation, and of you, is this: knowing thyself now, namely, thy true self which dialectically includes both invincible strength and your very own worst enemy (kryptonite), now what will you **do**?

Will you heed this sound, tried and true advice, or will you run from it? Will you try it your own way first, thinking pain and suffering that certainly results from seeming fun will not happen to you?

If you are rich, will you believe wealth will insulate or protect you, or perhaps buy your happiness?

Will you hide behind apparent freedom, knowing full well that you can run, but you can hide?

Most importantly, will you cheat yourself out of a life filled with Meaning?

For, one day, you will closely scrutinize your own self, really look at yourself as if in or through a mirror/looking glass, look back on your life, and ask yourself, what have I done? Beware, for that day will come, for as they say, “life comes at you fast.” When it does, you will face yourself, a judge that you can’t fool, and have no one else to blame but your very own egocentric, egological self. Far worse, by then, it may be too late to fix the consequences of your bad choices, and foolish inaction.

Moreover, will you squander the gifts and talents that God gave you?

## **F. The Parable of the Talents**

For even better guidance, consider the following valuable lesson:

Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more."

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

The man with the two talents also came. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with two talents. See, I have gained two more."

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

Then the man who had received the one talent came. "Master," he said, "I knew you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you."

His master replied, "You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”<sup>348</sup>

The moral to that “story” is that God has given you various talents, not actual money, but skills and abilities, including the very important ability to appreciate and apply Philosophy. Will you, like the wicked, slothful and worthless servant **do** nothing more than you have to, take no affirmative **action**, and risk being cast forth in darkness?

Notice, instead, all of the good that you could **do**, indeed, not with a sword, but will a pen, not with egocentrism, but with selflessness. As yet another example, consider the following fable:

Recall, for example, the fable concerning the large truck that was too tall to pass under a bridge. Upon consultation, solutions proffered by various seasoned experts, such as tearing down the bridge to construct one of additional height, freezing the entire truck in order to constrict its size scientifically, etc., were quite complex and cumbersome, not to mention costly. The quickest, easiest, and most inexpensive answer, however, came from a very young girl carrying not a degree, but a doll, “why don’t you just let a little bit of air out of the tires?”<sup>349</sup>

Notice, therefore, the good that little girl did, not with physical strength, but with smart intellect, not as a Goliath, but as a David, not with a dagger, but with, indeed, a doll. Witnesseth, therefore, the sheer strength and Hope that lies in the most unexpected places, in the littlest, selfless ones, indeed, perhaps in a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, laying in a manger...

## **G. The Smoking Gun**

Please also consider using such strength upon yourself first. Prevail over your egocentric, egological self yourself. Face it head on, because if you do acknowledge it in

your very own open court of conscience, you will steal the thunder from opposing counsel's proverbial smoking gun.

#### **H. A Life-Long “Prison for Your Mind”**

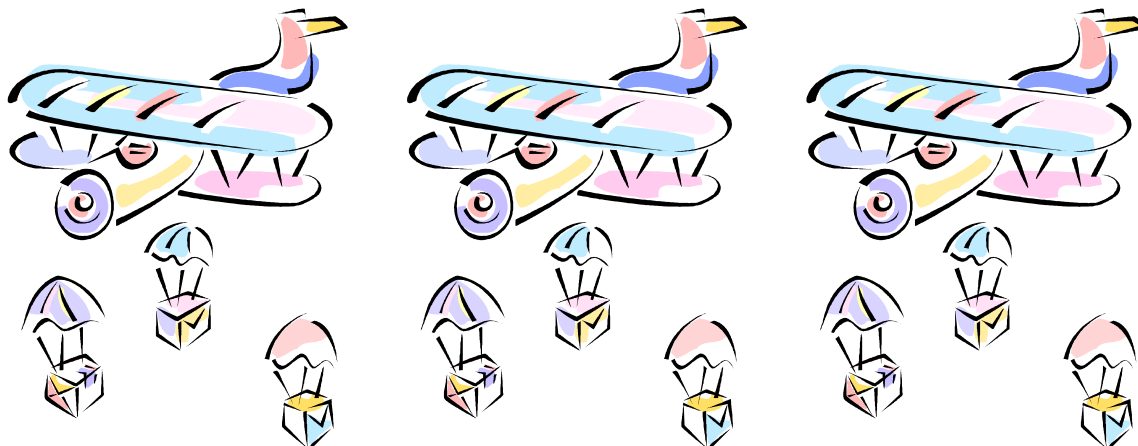
This is not a foreshadowing of an apocalypse, or of a doomsday death. Rather, is a warning of something that will haunt you forever as you live, namely, a “prison for your mind” (*see* Chapter VIII, subsection (B)(1)(c)) that you could create for yourself.

Rather than dying, you will live on in misery, hate yourself, and bear the undue burden of such a self-imposed ball and chain for the rest of your life. When it is too late, you will cry “*mia culpa*” (Italian for “my fault”) upon realizing that you have wasted your talents instead of constructing something impressive, namely, yourself.

#### **I. Deconstruct Yourself to Construct Yourself**

Like a prime piece of real estate, think of your life as a home that you shall construct. If so, you will use the very best quality materials and workmanship, which will withstand inclement weather, unforeseen misfortunes, and indeed, the test of time. For, that time will come.

Witnesseth, within, outside, before and behind your very own eyes, mind, heart, and soul, boxes are ever closing and opening...

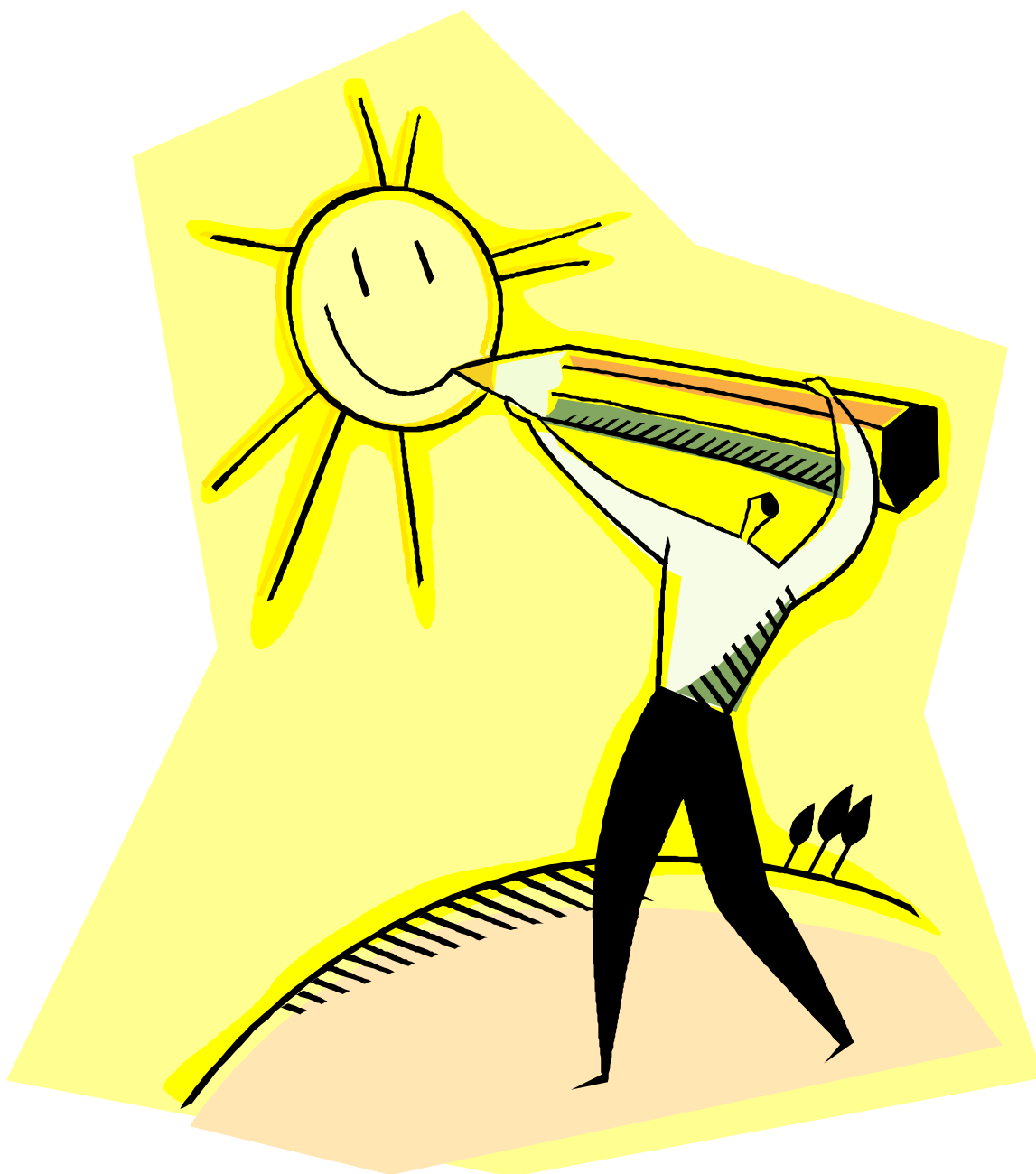


**J. Your Turn ...**

Alas, now it is time for me to go, and you to choose. Knowing all the foregoing, what will you **do**?



Turn the page, and see my suggestion ...



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## ***ENDNOTES***

### **Chapter I: Introduction**

- <sup>1</sup>       www.delanohighschool.org.
- <sup>2</sup>       Class notes, *Nietzsche and Deconstruction*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '91.
- <sup>3</sup>       Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup>       Accordingly, while the undersigned certainly appreciates and hereby incorporates by reference various learned comments made by one of the readers of this dissertation, Calvin L. Troup, Ph.D., an Assistant Professor in the Communication and Rhetorical Studies Department at Duquesne University, she respectfully submits that they are counterproductive to that particular laudable goal, whereas such a goal facilitates one of the most important precepts of Philosophy, *per se*, namely, free thought and freedom choice.
- <sup>5</sup>       Ibid.; Class notes, *Kant: Critique of Judgment*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02; Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02; Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02; referencing Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. See, therefore, Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner*, trans. W. Kaufmann, Vintage Books (New York: 1967).
- <sup>6</sup>       Class notes, *Nietzsche and Deconstruction*, DU, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '91.
- <sup>7</sup>       Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. W. Kaufmann, Vintage Books (New York: 1974), Prelude, pp. 39-69, and Appendix, pp. 349-375.
- <sup>8</sup>       See Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*.
- <sup>9</sup>       This was impressively suggested by Wilhelm S. Wurzer, Ph.D., the director of this dissertation, who is also the Chair of the Philosophy Department at Duquesne University. His learned publications include a book, *Filming and Judgment: Between Heidegger and Adorno*, Humanities Press International, Inc. (New Jersey and London: 1990); and an essay, *Culture Clowns on a Tour with Nietzsche and Heidegger*, in *Existential: An International Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XI, pp. 267-276 (Budapest: 2001). Hereto, the latter is especially applicable. The undersigned is, indeed, indebted to him, and could only hope to inspire as many students as he has.
- <sup>10</sup>       Ibid. See also Wurzer, *Culture Clowns*, P. 276, citing Heidegger, *The Age of the World Picture*.

### **Chapter II: The Idea of God**

- <sup>11</sup>       See Plato's *Symposium*, et al.
- <sup>12</sup>       See Augustine, *Contra Academicos*.
- <sup>13</sup>       Augustine, *On the Free Choice of the Will*, p.56.
- <sup>14</sup>       See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Questions 90 and 91. See also *Classics of Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 401-406.



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- 15      Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy, Third Meditation within the latter, pp. 69-81.
- 16      From Plato to Derrida, p. 474.
- 17      See Kant, Critique of Judgment.
- 18      See Derrida, Of Grammatology.
- 19      See Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit.
- 20      See Heidegger, Being in Time.
- 21      Augustine, Confessions, p. 43. See also Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, p. 133.
- 22      Class notes, *St. Augustine*, Duquesne University, Prof. Ramirez, Spring '01.
- 23      Augustine, Confessions, pp. 343 and 345.
- 24      <http://web.utk.edu/~gwynne/maslow.HTM>.
- 25      Class notes, *Communications-Science & Revolution*, Duquesne University, (Professor's name not recalled), Fall '86.
- 26      See Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Questions 90 and 91. See also Classics of Moral and Political Theory, pp. 401-406.
- 27      See Ibid., p. 385.
- 28      Class notes, *St. Augustine*, Duquesne University, Prof. Ramirez, Spring '01.
- 29      See Descartes' Third Meditation in Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy, pp. 69-81.
- 30      See Kant, Critique of Pure Reason.
- 31      Wurzer, Wilhelm S., "Culture Clowns on a Tour with Nietzsche and Heidegger", Existential: An International Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XI, pp. 267-276 (Budapest: 2001).
- 32      See Perniola, Ritual Thinking.
- 33      See Vattimo, The End of Modernity, pp. 31 and 101.
- 34      See Heidegger, The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking.
- 35      See Wurzer, Wilhelm S., Culture Clowns on a Tour with Nietzsche and Heidegger, in Existential: An International Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XI, pp. 267-276 (Budapest: 2001).
- 36      Ibid., p. 269.
- 37      Shakespeare, William, *As You Like It*.
- 38      See Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 270.

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- 39 Ibid., p. 271, citing Heidegger, Martin, The Age of the World Picture in The Question Concerning Philosophy, trans. W. Lovitt, Harper & Row (New York: 1977), p. 133.
- 40 Ibid., p. 268.
- 41 See Perniola, Ritual Thinking, et al.
- 42 See Plato, Republic, pp. 312-316.
- 43 Nietzsche, The Gay Science, p. 181.
- 44 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02.
- 45 Küng, Does God Exist?, p. 252.

### Chapter III: The Death of The Idea of God

- 46 Class notes, *Metaphysics: Aquinas and Plato*, Duquesne University, Prof. Strasser, Spring '91; and Class notes, *Early Modern Philosophy*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Fall '86.
- 47 Class notes, *Early Modern Philosophy*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Fall '86.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Ibid., p.477.
- 50 Ibid., p.481.
- 51 Ibid., p.474.
- 52 Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, pp. 455, 476.
- 53 Class notes, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, Duquesne University, Prof. Rockmore, Fall '01.
- 54 Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, pp. 104-111.
- 55 Ibid., pp. 111-119.
- 56 Ibid., p. 428.
- 57 Ibid., p. 459.
- 58 Ibid., p. 473.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 178-186, 300, etc..
- 61 Küng, Does God Exist?, p. 329.
- 62 Ibid., p. 217.

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- 63 Ibid., p. 204.
- 64 Ibid., p. 209.
- 65 Ibid., pp. 202-203.
- 66 See Küng, Does God Exist?
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 E.g., Wurzer, conference critiquing this dissertation, Duquesne, University, Oct. 4, 2004.
- 69 Ibid., p. 359.
- 70 Ibid., p. 350.
- 71 Ibid., p. 391.
- 72 Ibid., p. 359.
- 73 Ibid., p. 374.
- 74 Ibid., p. 391.
- 75 Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner, trans. W. Kaufmann, Vintage Books (New York: 1967).
- 76 Class notes, *Nietzsche and Deconstruction*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '91.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Class notes, *Kant: Critique of Judgment*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02; Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02; Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02.
- 79 Class notes, *Nietzsche and Deconstruction*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '91.
- 80 Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 123.
- 81 See Ibid., p. 142.
- 82 Ibid., 104.
- 83 Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, pp. 392-394.
- 84 See Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, pp. 22-23.
- 85 See Ibid., pp. 31-32.
- 86 See Ibid., pp. 43-44.
- 87 See Ibid., p. 38.
- 88 Ibid., p. 45.

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- 89      *See* Ibid., p. 111.
- 90      Ibid.
- 91      *See* Ibid., p. 109.
- 92      Ibid., p. 129.
- 93      Ibid., p. 132.
- 94      *See* Ibid., p. 73.
- 95      *See* Plato, Republic, pp. 312-316.
- 96      *See* Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 67.
- 97      Ibid., p. 55.
- 98      Ibid., p. 57.
- 99      *See* Ibid., pp. 135-136.
- 100     *See* Ibid., p. 92.
- 101     Ibid., p. 54.
- 102     Ibid., p. 55.
- 103     *See* Ibid., pp. 100-101.
- 104     *See* Ibid., pp. 101-102.
- 105     *See* Ibid., pp. 103-104.
- 106     *See* Ibid., p. 102.
- 107     *See* Ibid., p. 20.
- 108     *See* Ibid., p. 93.
- 109     *See* Ibid., p. 94.
- 110     Ibid., p. 89.
- 111     *See* Ibid., pp. 94 and 98.
- 112     Ibid., p. 143.
- 113     Ibid., p. 144.
- 114     Ibid., p. 91.
- 115     *See* Ibid., p. 73.
- 116     Ibid., p. 48.

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- 117     See *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- 118     Rochin v. California, 342 U.S. 165, 72 S.Ct. 205, 209, 96 L.Ed. 183 (1952).
- 119     Handout provided by Waite, Geoff, during The Criminal of the Criminals is the Philosopher (Nietzsche), Lecture at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh campus, Feb. 4, 2004, citing Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, The Antichrist.
- 120     Uhuru Hotep, Ed.D., is an Associate Director of the Spiritan Division of Academic Programs in the Learning Skills Center at Duquesne University. The undersigned is, indeed, indebted to him for many things, including but not limited to, the opportunity to actually give students grades that they actually earned, rather than hypocritically dispensing only A+'s, A's, A-'s, and B+'s, that so many other educational programs, etc., impliedly expect teachers to do, not for the good of such students, but rather, only for the sinister pecuniary reason of padding enrollment.
- 121     This was pointed out by one of the attendees of Waite's lecture. (*see* endnote no. 119 above).
- 122     Class notes, *Criminal Law*, Duquesne University School of Law, Prof. Astorino, '97-'98 school year.
- 123     Class notes, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, Duquesne University, Prof. Ramirez, Fall '01. *See also* Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Question 90.
- 124     Nietzsche, The Gay Science, p. 181 *See also* Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra.
- 125     Küng, Does God Exist?, pp. 372-373.
- 126     *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- 127     *Ibid.*, p. 239.
- 128     *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- 129     Durant, The Story of Philosophy, p. 445.
- 130     *See* Kant, Critique of Pure Reason.
- 131     *See* Kant, Critique of Judgment.
- 132     Class notes, *Kant: Critique of Judgment*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02.
- 133     Class notes, *Kant: Critique of Judgment*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Summer '92.
- 134     *Ibid.* *See also* Kant, Critique of Judgment, p. 69.
- 135     Class notes, *Derrida*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Fall '01.
- 136     *Ibid.* *See also* Derrida, Of Grammatology.
- 137     Derrida, The Truth in Painting, p. 79.
- 138     *See* Derrida, Of Grammatology.
- 139     *See* From Plato to Derrida, p. 1176.

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- 140 Derrida, Ellipse, p. 127.
- 141 See Derrida, Of Grammatology.
- 142 Class notes, *Derrida*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Fall '01.
- 143 See From Plato to Derrida, p. 1177.
- 144 See Plato, Republic, pp. 342-363. See also Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, pp. 67-71.
- 145 See Webster's New World Dictionary.
- 146 See Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, pp. 42-65.
- 147 See Plato, Phaedrus.
- 148 See Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, p. 70.
- 149 See Plato, Republic, pp. 342-363. See also Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, p. 71.
- 150 Plato, Republic, p. 363.
- 151 Class notes, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, Duquesne University, Prof. Rockmore, Fall '01.
- 152 Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince, Chapter XVIII.
- 153 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02.
- 154 K  ng, Does God Exist?, p. 438. See also Sartre, Being and Nothingness.
- 155 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 31.
- 156 Perniola, Ritual Thinking, pp. 44, 65.
- 157 Ibid., p. 65.
- 158 Ibid., pp. 46-47.
- 159 See Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 273.
- 160 Perniola, Ritual Thinking, p. xxxiv. See also Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 269.
- 161 Augustine, Confessions, p. 43.
- 162 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 54.
- 163 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02. See also K  ng, Does God Exist?, p. 252.

## Chapter V: Parasitic Evil Consequence: Debt-Capitalism

- 164 Marx, and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. 27.

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- 165 See Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, pp. 383-386.
- 166 See Marx, The German Ideology: Part One.
- 167 Marx, Communist Manifesto, p. 37.
- 168 See Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, pp. 386-387.
- 169 See Marx, Communist Manifesto, pp. 38-41.
- 170 Class notes, *Communications-Science & Revolution*, Duquesne University, (Professor's name not recalled), Spring '87.
- 171 See Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Question 66, Second Article, in Classics of Moral and Political Theory, pp. 415-416.
- 172 See Küng, Does God Exist?, p. 251.
- 173 Class notes, *Business Ethics*, Duquesne University, Prof. Holveck, Spring '89.
- 174 Justice: Selected Readings, p. 105.
- 175 Class notes, *Business Ethics*, Duquesne University, Prof. Holveck, Spring '89.
- 176 Ibid.
- 177 Justice: Selected Readings, p. 108.
- 178 Ibid., 109.
- 179 Class notes, *Business Ethics*, Duquesne University, Prof., Holveck, Spring '89 (emphasis added).
- 180 Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, Aphorism 92, p. 168.
- 181 Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, p. 397.
- 182 See Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, pp. 81-82, 112, etc.; and Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 25-28; 31-32.
- 183 Küng, Does God Exist?, pp. 104-105.
- 184 Poster provided pursuant to professional courtesy by the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group.
- 185 Sabatini, Patricia, Some unethical mortgage firms prey on seniors, in Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, April 16, 2004, p. C-4 (emphasis added).
- 186 Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 178-186, 300, etc.
- 187 Ibid., p. 249 (emphasis added).
- 188 See Plato, Symposium, pp. 85-89.
- 189 Ibid., pp. 99-106.

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- 190 Ibid., p. 102.
- 191 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02.
- 192 Ibid., p. 105.
- 193 Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 2-7.
- 194 Ibid., p. 22.
- 195 Ibid., pp. 21, 43.
- 196 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
- 197 Ibid., pp. 190-193.
- 198 Ibid., pp. 37, 49-58.
- 199 Ibid., pp. 83-105, 125, 336-338.
- 200 Ibid., pp. 126-131, 164-168.
- 201 Ibid., p. 127.
- 202 Ibid., p. 128-129.
- 203 Ibid., p. 239.
- 204 Ibid., p. 166.
- 205 Ibid., pp. 156-159, 250.
- 206 Ibid., pp. 18, 166.
- 207 Ibid., pp. 132, 176.
- 208 Ibid., pp. 172-179.
- 209 Ibid., p. 245.
- 210 Ibid., p. 173.
- 211 Ibid., p. 112.
- 212 Ibid., pp. 178-186.
- 213 Ibid., p. 216.
- 214 Ibid., p. 220.
- 215 Ibid., p. 336.
- 216 Ibid., p. 227.
- 217 Ibid., p. 228.



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- 218 Ibid., p. 221.
- 219 Ibid., p. 249.
- 220 Ibid., pp. 233-240, 307-321.
- 221 Ibid., p. 65.
- 222 Ibid., pp. 159-162, 318-319.
- 223 Ibid., p. 318.
- 224 Ibid., pp. 243-244.
- 225 Ibid., p. 246.
- 226 Ibid., p. 245.
- 227 Ibid., pp. 249-259.
- 228 Ibid., p. 300.
- 229 Ibid., p. 245.
- 230 Ibid., p. 271.
- 231 Ibid., pp. 114-115.
- 232 Ibid., p. 291.
- 233 Ibid., p. 362.
- 234 Ibid., pp. 18, 20, 34, 40, 81-82, 134, 136, 139, 153, 178, 219, 288-289.
- 235 Ibid., pp. 134, 289.
- 236 See Bentham, An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation.
- 237 See Mill, Utilitarianism.
- 238 See Plato, Phaedrus; Plato, Republic, pp. 235-246; and a summary of both in Stumpf, Socrates to Sarte, p. 60.
- 239 Küng, Does God Exist?, p. 242.
- 240 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 133.
- 241 Ibid.
- 242 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02.
- 243 Augustine, Confessions, p. 354.
- 244 See Wurzer, Culture Clowns, et al.

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- 245 Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 276.
- 246 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, pp. 31, 101, etc.

## Chapter VI: The Answer: A Self-Negating Hero

- 247 Prior Army recruiting slogan.
- 248 Prior Nike tennis shoe commercial slogan.
- 249 Class notes, *Philosophy of Film*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '92. *See also* Wurzer, Filming and Judgment.
- 250 Class notes, *World Religions*, Duquesne University, (Professor's name not recalled), Fall '86.
- 251 Ibid.
- 252 *See* Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 31.
- 253 *See* Derrida, Of Grammatology.
- 254 Class notes, *Philosophy of Film*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '92.
- 255 Luke 14: 1, 7-14.
- 256 Matthew 23:12.
- 257 *See* the Christmas movie entitled, *It's A Wonderful life*.
- 258 Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince, Chapter XVII.
- 259 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 54.
- 260 Ibid., pp. 60-61.
- 261 Ibid., p. 87.
- 262 Ibid., xxxvii.
- 263 Perniola, Ritual Thinking, p. 165.
- 264 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 84.
- 265 *See* Perniola, Ritual Thinking, p. 165.
- 266 *See, e.g.,* Vattimo, The End of Modernity; Perniola, Ritual Thinking; Wurzer, Culture Clowns, etc.
- 267 Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 269.
- 268 *See* Ibid.
- 269 *See* Ibid., p. 273.

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- 270 Ibid., p. 270.
- 271 Ibid., pp. 271-273.
- 272 Ibid., p. 272, citing Heidegger, The Age of the World Picture, p. 123.
- 273 Ibid., p. 273.
- 274 Ibid., p. 275.
- 275 Ibid., p. 276, citing two essays by Heidegger, The Age of the World Picture, and The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking.
- 276 See Ibid., 276.
- 277 Ibid.
- 278 See Heidegger, Being in Time, pp. 159-162, 318-319.
- 279 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02.
- 280 Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince, Chapter X.
- 281 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02.
- 282 Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Saturday College, Prof. Wurzer, Winter '01-'02.
- 283 See Heidegger, The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking.
- 284 Syllabus, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Fall '01.
- 285 McCarthy, David. J., opinion, "George" not crying wolf: an allegory in one act, with sheep, in The Pitt News, March 26, 2004.
- 286 Luke 15:1-10.
- 287 Augustine, Confessions, p. 343.

## Chapter VII: Come Back to Me With All Your Heart

- 288 See Augustine, Confessions, et al.
- 289 Class notes, *Augustine.*, Duquesne University, Prof. Ramirez, Spring, '01.
- 290 Ibid.
- 291 Luke 15: 11-32.
- 292 See Heidegger, Being in Time, pp. 178-186, 300, etc.
- 293 See Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, pp. 18-19.

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294 Ibid., p. 140.

295 Augustine, Confessions, p. 43.

### Chapter VIII: Philosophy of Film: Virtues and Vices

296 See Heidegger, The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking. See also, Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 276, citing same; and Heidegger, The Age of the World Picture.

297 Warner Studios, 1999.

298 Lucas Film, Ltd., 1989.

299 Touchstone Pictures, 1995.

300 See The Matrix and Philosophy: Welcome to the Desert of the Real, ed. W. Irvin, Open Court Publishing Co. (Chicago: 2002), p. 1.

301 See Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 54.

302 Rochin v. California, 342 U.S. at 172.

303 Twentieth Century Fox, 1968.

304 The Matrix and Philosophy, p. 2.

305 Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 272.

306 See, Plato, Republic, pp. 312-316.

307 Ibid. (emphasis added).

308 See, Plato, Symposium, et al.

309 Sinatra, Frank, *All The Way*.

310 See Plato, Apology.

311 Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 119.

312 Lucas Film, Ltd., 1989.

313 Touchstone Pictures, 1995.

314 Lucas Film, Ltd., 1989.

315 Touchstone Pictures, 1995.

316 Warner Studios, 1994.

317 Twentieth Century Fox, 1990.

318 Walt Disney, MCMLV.

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- 319     *See* Plato, Symposium.
- 320     Warner Brothers, 1998.
- 321     Walt Disney, 1994.
- 322     Columbia Pictures, 1997.
- 323     Twentieth Century Fox, 1965.
- 324     Le Studio Canal, 1994.
- 325     Dreamworks, LLC and Universal Studios, 2000.
- 326     *See* Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, pp. 42-65.
- 327     Twentieth Century Fox, 1999.
- 328     *See* Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit.
- 329     *See* Mill, Utilitarianism.
- 330     Wurzer, Culture Clowns, p. 276.
- 331     *Ibid.* (emphasis added).

#### **Chapter IX:   Surprise Conclusion: Moderate Critique**

- 332     Class notes, *Basic Philosophical Questions*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Spring '02.
- 333     *Ibid.*
- 334     Class notes, *Derrida*, Duquesne University, Prof. Wurzer, Fall '01.
- 335     Durant, The Story of Philosophy, p. 445.
- 336     (Author unknown).
- 337     Derrida, Truth in Painting, p. 382.
- 338     Vattimo, The End of Modernity, p. 116.
- 339     Class notes, *Metaphysics: Aquinas and Plato*, Duquesne University, Prof. Strasser, Spring '91.
- 340     Class notes, *St. Augustine*, Duquesne University, Prof. Ramirez, Spring '01
- 341     *Ibid.* *See also* Augustine, On the Free Choice of the Will.
- 342     Class notes, *Metaphysics: Aquinas and Plato*, Duquesne University, Prof. Strasser, Spring '91.
- 343     Heidegger, Being in Time, pp. 178-186, 300, etc.
- 344     *See* Plato, Symposium.

345 Aquinas, Treatise on Law, in Summa Theologiae, questions 90-97.

346 Ibid.

### Chapter X: One Box Closes and Another Opens

347 See Augustine, On the Free Choice of the Will, et al.

348 Matthew 25: 14-30.

349 This passage, of which I am the author, was published by a very prestigious entity. However, practicing what I preach, indeed, until the very end, I shall humbly and respectfully refrain from egocentrically or egologically citing myself...



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